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MEMOIRS

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE,

EARL OF ORFORD.

BY

WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.A.S.

ARCHDEACON OF WILTS.

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MEMOIRS

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

PERIOD THE THIRD:

From the South Sea Act to the Death of GEORGE I:
1720—1727.

CHAPTER 19.

1720.

Origin and Progress of the South Sea Company—Their Project for liquidating the National Debt—Espoused by the Ministry—Opposed by Walpole—Accepted by Parliament—Walpole reconciles the King and the Prince of Wales—Forms a Coalition with Sunderland—Townshend appointed President of the Council—Walpole Paymaster of the Forces—Retires into the Country.

THE commencement of this period forms a memorable æra in the political life of Sir Robert Walpole, and holds him forth as the restorer of the national credit, which the fatal effects of the South Sea scheme brought to the brink of destruction.

The South Sea Company owed its origin to a chimerical project, formed by Harley in 1711,

for the purpose of restoring public credit, which had been greatly affected by the dismission of the Whig ministry, and of establishing a fund for discharging the navy and army debentures, and the other parts of the floating debt, which amounted to £.9,471,325; and was afterwards increased to £. 10,000,000. With a view to settle a fund for paying the interest of 6 per cent. on these arrears, which required the annual sum of £.568,279, all the duties upon wines, vinegar, tobacco, India goods, wrought silks, whale fins, and a few others were rendered permanent. To allure the creditors with the hope of advantage from a new commerce, the monopoly of a trade to the South Sea, or coast of Spanish America, was granted to a company composed of the proprietors of this funded debt, which being incorporated by act of parliament, took the appellation of the South Sea Company.* The great benefits to be derived from this commerce, had been exaggerated from the time of our first voyages to Spanish America, in the reign of Elizabeth, and still farther increased by the reports of the buccaneers. The considerable riches which France had brought from America, since the establishment of Philip the Fifth on the throne of Spain had contributed to raise the sanguine expectations of the British merchants; a rumour, industriously circulated, that four ports on the coasts of Peru and Chili,

* Postlethwayt's History of the South Sea Company [illegible] Commerce, [illegible]—Hume, vol. 17. p. 361.

were to be ceded by Spain, inflamed the general ardour; the prospect of exchanging gold, silver, and rich drugs for the manufactures of England, were plausible allurements for an enterprising and commercial nation; and the mines of Potosi and Mexico, were to diffuse their inexhaustible stores through the medium of the new company.

The famous act of parliament, which incorporated the subscribers of the debts, under the name of the governor and company of merchants of Great Britain, trading to the South Seas and other parts of America, was called the earl of Oxford's master piece, and considered by his panegyrists as the sure means of bringing an inexhaustible mine of riches into England. But in fact this scheme was settled on a false foundation; for by the peace of Utrecht, Spain and the Indies being confirmed to Philip the Fifth, that monarch was too jealous to admit the English to a free trade in the South Sea, and instead of the advantageous commerce which Oxford had held forth, the company obtained only the * assiento contract, or the privilege of supplying the Spanish colonies of America with negroes for 30 years, with the permission of sending to Spanish America an annual ship, limited both as to tonnage and value of cargo, of the profits of which the king of Spain reserved one fourth, and five per cent. on the other fourths †. This disappointment was attempted to be counteracted by the declaration

* Assiento is a Spanish word, signifying a firm or contract.

† Anderson, vol. 3. page 55.

made by Oxford, that Spain had permitted two ships, in addition to the annual ship, to carry merchandize, during the first year to the northern coasts of Spanish America, and a pompous nomination of the several ports where the company had leave to trade, and settle factories. But the grand benefits of this commerce were never realised. The first voyage of the annual ship was not performed till 1717, and in the following year, the trade was suppressed by the rupture with Spain. The property, factories, and servants of the company, were seized and detained, notwithstanding the agreement in the assiento, which allowed, in case of a rupture, eighteen months for the removal of their effects.

Such was the state of the South Sea company, when the ministry, instead of attempting to lessen the national incumbrances, by the only just and successful means, a clear and inviolable sinking fund, adopted the visionary schemes of projectors, and gave to the company the power of fascinating the minds of the public, and spreading an infatuation similar to that which had recently involved France in a national bankruptcy. The grand point which government had in view, was the reduction of the irredeemable annuities, created in the reigns of William and Anne, for a period of 89, 96, and 99 years, amounting nearly to £.800,000 per annum, as no effectual measures could be adopted to lessen the public debts, while these annuities remained irredeemable.

To effect this liquidation, the minister accepted proposals from the South Sea company, for reducing the debts to a redeemable state. As the object of the ministers, who had previously and secretly arranged the scheme with the directors, was, to surprise the house of commons into the measure of granting this extensive privilege to the South Sea company, and of preventing competition, they entertained the most sanguine hopes of success, from the specious advantages which they held forth to the public as the necessary consequences. They accordingly laid the business before a committee of the house of commons, on the 22nd of February.* Aislabie having opened the proposal of the South Sea company, and declared, that, if it was accepted, the national debt could be liquidated in twenty-six years, was followed by secretary Craggs, who, after congratulating the chancellor of the exchequer, on the clear and intelligible manner in which he had explained the business, and the nation on the prospect of discharging the debt sooner than was generally expected, concluded by observing, that no other regular motion could be made, than that the chairman should report progress, and desire leave to sit again, as he took it for granted, that every gentleman was ready and willing to receive the proposal according to the scheme which had been so well explained.

On sitting down a profound silence ensued,

* Journals.

and continued for almost a quarter of an hour, until the secretary made the motion in form. Thomas Broderick,* member for Stockbridge, then rose, and after observing, that until the national debt was discharged, we could not properly speaking, call ourselves a nation, and therefore every proposal, tending to that great end, ought to be received and considered; he added, that the first gentleman who spoke, appeared to recommend this scheme exclusively, and the secretary had agreed with him; but it was to be hoped, that with a view of obtaining the best bargain for the nation, every other company, or any society of men, might be also at full liberty to deliver in their proposals. This observation disconcerted and confounded the ministers. They felt themselves embarrassed, and being unable to give any reasonable argument in favour of such a conduct, they had recourse to violent assertions and personal reflections. Aislabie, in particular, having used some unguarded expressions, "*that things of this nature must be carried on with spirit,*" was interrupted by Sir Joseph Jekyl, who observed, with much warmth, "It is this spirit which has undone the nation; our business is to consider thoroughly, deliberate calmly, and judge of the whole upon reason, not with the spirit alluded to." Aislabie, in attempting to explain, betrayed so much embarrassment, that he excited the laughter of the house. Walpole then

* Brother of Lord Middleton, lord Chancellor of Ireland.

rose, and put a momentary stop to these indecorous altercations. He applauded the design, agreed in general to the propriety of the scheme, but declared that some parts required amendment, and a few others were unreasonable, concluding strongly in favour of receiving all proposals, which seemed to be almost the general opinion. Lechmere replied; but instead of confining himself to the subject in debate, he poured forth invectives against the scheme which had been proposed by Walpole, for the payment of the national debt, and gave the preference to that before the house. Walpole, irritated by this virulent attack, rose again, and with no less asperity, but with more calmness and skill, retorted on Lechmere. He proved, from papers * which he held in his hand, that the member who spoke last had unfairly represented facts, exposed his deceitful mode of reasoning, entered minutely into the scheme, and

* Among the Orford Papers, are several notes and memorandums in Sir Robert Walpole's hand-writing, which contain comparative accounts of the two proposals, and give the preference to that of the bank. These are probably some of the papers from which he made his statements to the house, but as they were written merely for his own private use, and consist principally of figures, with few specific references, little use could be made of them. The magnitude of the South Sea project, will appear from one of these notes.

South Sea, present capital.....	11,746,844	8	10
Purchase of the redeemable debts.....	15,924,218	12	10½
Irredeemables.....	15,057,493	13	8
And including the original capital, the whole stock is.....	£.42,728,556	15	4½

laid open its fallacy in many material points. Lechmere, still farther provoked, again attempted to reply, but met with repeated interruptions. In vain the chairman called to order, and exclaimed, "Hear your member!" The whole house repeatedly cried out, "We have heard him long enough!" The speaker having resumed the chair, the house unanimously agreed to receive all proposals, and to resolve itself into a committee on the following Wednesday, to consider farther of the subject.*

In consequence of these resolutions, the bank of England laid a proposition before the commons, offering still more advantageous terms, and as it was supposed that considerable benefits would accrue to those whose scheme was accepted, a strong competition prevailed between the bank and South Sea company, each endeavouring to outbid the other. The South Sea company had offered £.3,500,000; but the bank having bid £.5,500,000, the company were so irritated, that at a general court, the directors were instructed to obtain the preference, *cost what it would*,† and they succeeded, by the offer of paying £.7,567,500, as a gratuity to the public. This proposal being laid before the house of commons, was warmly opposed by Walpole, who spoke in favour of the

* No account of this extraordinary debate is to be found in any publication:—The substance is taken from a letter of Thomas Broderick to lord chancellor Middleton, January 24th. See Correspondence, Period III.

† True state of the South Sea Scheme.

bank. In vain he displayed the fallacy of the South Sea scheme, and the great difference between that and the proposal of the bank, by showing, that the company was not limited in the price they were to put on the stock made over to them; whereas the bank offered a specific sum of £.1,700 stock, for every hundred pounds in the long annuities, and the same proportion for the short annuities. In vain he urged, that it countenanced the pernicious practice of stock jobbing, by diverting the genius of the nation from trade and industry; that it held out a dangerous lure for decoying the unwary to their ruin by a false prospect of gain, and to part with the gradual profits of their labour, for imaginary wealth. In vain he insisted, that if the proposal of the South Sea company should be accepted, the rise of their stock ought to be limited. In vain he dwelt on the miseries and confusion which then prevailed in France, from the adoption of similar measures. In vain he argued, that as the whole success of the scheme must chiefly depend on the rise of the stock, the great principle of the project was an evil of the first magnitude; it was to raise artificially the value of the stock, by exciting a general infatuation, and by promising dividends out of funds which would not be adequate to the purpose. In vain he predicted, that if the establishment succeeded, the directors would become masters of the government, form an absolute aristocracy in the kingdom, and control the resolutions of the legislature;

or if it did not succeed, the failure would cause a general discontent. He closed his speech by observing, "such will be the delusive consequences, that the public will conceive it a dream."* His arguments and his eloquence were of no avail. He was compared by his friends to Cassandra, predicting evils which would only be believed when the event proved their reality, and only deprecated when they were felt; and he whose speeches, in matters of finance, occupied the house with more than usual attention, was now scarcely heard. The preference was given to the South Sea company, and on the 2nd of April, the bill was carried by a majority of more than 3 to 1.† Thus passed this fatal act, compared by earl Cowper to the Trojan horse, which was ushered in and received with great pomp and acclamations of joy, but was contrived for treachery and destruction. Walpole not only spoke with energy against the project, but gave to the public a sensible pamphlet on the subject, intituled, "The South Sea Scheme considered."‡

At this period Sunderland was involved in great difficulties. He had promised the Hano-

* Political State of Europe, vol. 20. *Anderson.—Memorandums and Letters in the Walpole and Orford Papers.

† Journals.—Political State, vol. 19. p. 430.

‡ Royal and Noble Authors—Article, Earl of Orford. History of the South Sea Company.—Anderson, vol. 3.—Steuart's Political Œconomy, vol. 2. p. 387.—Sir Robert Walpole's Pamphlet, called South Sea Scheme considered.—Sir John Blunt's Pamphlet; The true State of the South Sea Scheme.—Political State of Great Britain, vol. 19, 20, 21.—Tindal, vol. 19.

verians to procure a repeal of the restraining clause in the act of settlement; but the success which marked the efforts of his adversaries, proved the impracticability of such an attempt. The impatience of the foreign favourites to obtain the full possession of the expected honours and emoluments, rendered them dissatisfied with the minister, who while he professed his inclination, avowed his want of power to gratify them. Thus exposed to the hostile attacks of one party, and ill supported by the other, he found himself under the necessity of gaining friends to strengthen his administration. The opposition which Walpole had given to the measures of government, and his great influence in the house of commons, where he was feebly resisted by Craggs, Aislabie, and Lechmere, pointed him out as the most desirable co-adjutor in the present state of circumstances; overtures were made to him and Townshend, and a partial coalition took place.

On the 6th of May, Walpole seconded a motion, made by Pelham, for an address of thanks to the king; on the 4th of June he was appointed paymaster general of the forces, and on the 11th Townshend was nominated president of the council. Previously, however, to this arrangement, Walpole, in conjunction with the duke of Devonshire, had been the principal means of effecting a reconciliation between the king and the prince of Wales, whose misunderstanding had arisen to so alarming a height, as to threaten a disturbance of the public tranquil-

lity. The causes of this misunderstanding have been already related, and it was still farther increased and brought into notice, by an incident which happened at the christening of one of the young princes. The king was to stand as one godfather, and the prince had designed his uncle, the duke of York, for the other; but, when the ceremony was performed, the duke of Newcastle, lord chamberlain of the household, stood godfather, by the king's command, not as proxy for the duke of York, but in his own name. Irritated at this circumstance the prince, at the conclusion of the ceremony, violently reproached the duke, almost in the king's presence, for having solicited the honour in his despite. The king, incensed at this indiscreet want of respect, signified his displeasure, by commanding him to remain in his apartment, under arrest, and soon afterwards ordered him to quit the palace. Notice was also formally given, that no persons who paid their respects to the prince and princess of Wales, would be received at court, and they were deprived of their usual guard, and of all other marks of distinction.*

The resentment of the king was also carried to such an extremity, that, with a view to embarrass his son, he formed a resolution of obtaining an act of parliament for compelling him to resign, on his accession to the throne, his German dominions. With this view, the opinion of the lord

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 169.

chancellor Parker, afterwards earl of Macclesfield, was demanded, and a conference held to consider the legality and expediency of the scheme. The answer given by the chancellor, fully put a stop to the measure, as inexpedient and impracticable, and liable to be followed by dangerous consequences. *

The honour of effecting the reconciliation in the royal family was principally due to Walpole. In a conference which he held with Sunderland, to arrange the plans of a joint administration, the minister, who was averse to the union of the two courts, endeavoured to detach him from the prince, and offered any conditions for himself and friends, provided he would consent that the prince should remain in disgrace. † But Walpole rejected these overtures, and insisted on the reconciliation, as an indispensable preliminary, before he would listen to any terms. Having extorted this concession, he, with the assistance of the duke of Devonshire, ‡ disposed the prince of Wales to write a submissive letter, in which permission was requested to wait upon the king. He was accordingly admitted to a private conference, and on his return from the palace to Leicester house, where he had taken up his residence, was attended by a

* The original draught of this curious conference, in the handwriting of the lord chancellor, was communicated to me by the late Thomas Astle, esquire.

† Etough.—Communicated by Sir Robert Walpole.

‡ Tindal, vol. 19. p. 344. Grove's Lives of the Dukes of Devonshire, vol. 2. p. 90.

party of guards, and from that time the father and son appeared to be reconciled.

Although Walpole accepted the place of paymaster of the forces, yet he did not cordially coalesce with the administration; and on the prorogation of parliament, July 28, 1720, he took no active share in the government. He passed the remaining part of the summer at Houghton, and was called to take a leading part, when the voice of the king, of the parliament, and of the nation unanimously singled him out as the person best qualified to heal the wounds, which the frenzy and frauds of the South Sea company had inflicted on the public credit.

CHAPTER 20.

1720—1721.

Departure of the King for Hanover—Rise and Fall of the South Sea Stock—National Infatuation and Despair—Walpole's Endeavours to restore the Credit of the Company—The King returns from Hanover—Alarming State of Affairs—Embarrassment of the Ministry—Despondency of the King—Walpole's Plan for the Restoration of Public Credit—Discussed.

ON the 14th of June, the king departed for Hanover; having previously named a council of regency, composed of several high officers of state, contrary to the general expectation, which in consequence of the supposed union between the king and prince of Wales, looked to him as regent in the absence of his father.

At this crisis the general frenzy in favour of the South Sea speculation had risen to an enormous height. The compensation to the company, for the immediate payment of the £.7,567,500, seemingly for no value received, was to be drawn from the profits of their scheme. These profits were to arise from, 1. The exclusive advantages of the trade, which although precarious, and depending on a peace with Spain, were stated at no less than £.200,000 a year. 2. The allowance for the charge of management, which was to be proportioned to the aug-

mentation of their stock. 3. The difference of receiving 5 per cent. for the money expended in purchasing the public debts, when the usual interest was only 4 per cent. 4. The great addition to their wealth, from the constant rise in the price of the stock, in consequence of the artifices used to enhance its value; on which the whole success of the scheme depended.*

The company could not fulfil its engagements with government, and pay so large a sum as between seven and eight millions, without taking advantage of the general infatuation, and availing themselves of that spirit of pecuniary enterprise, which had seized the public mind. Imaginary advantages were accordingly held forth; groundless and mysterious † reports were circulated concerning valuable acquisitions in the South Sea, and hidden treasures; dividends of ten, thirty, and even fifty per cent. were voted, which the directors knew could never be paid, and for which there was no foundation.

* Steuart's Political Œconomy, vol. 2. p. 386, 387. Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. 3. p. 96.

† To these mysterious hints and fancied treasures, a ballad on the South Sea alluded:

What need have we of Indian Wealth;
Or commerce with our neighbours?
Our constitution is in health,
And riches crown our labours.
Our South Sea ships have golden shrouds,
They bring us wealth 'tis granted;
But lodge their treasure in the clouds,
To hide it till it's wanted.

Political State, vol. 20. p. 178.

The promoters of the scheme highly exaggerated the profits; rumours were at the same time spread, that the company, by monopolizing the fund of the whole national debt, would reduce government to the necessity of applying to them for loans, which would be advanced on their own terms; and it was even insinuated, that the proprietors would obtain, by the weight of their wealth, a majority in the house of commons, and make and depose ministers. The public being intoxicated with these ideas, the stock, which at the close of the books at Christmas, 1719, was only at 126, rose, at the opening of the first subscription, on the 14th of April, to above £. 300, the market-price being on that day 325: in other words, the creditors of the nation made over a debt of 100 for 33⅓ in South Sea stock. As the frenzy spread, and the desire of making rapid fortunes became contagious, the stock successively rose to above 1,000 per cent. at which price the books were opened for the fourth subscription the 24th of August; and this subscription, though the market-price of the established stock was below 800, was sold the same day for a premium of 30 and 40 per cent.

The sanguine cupidity, which marked this speculation, was not confined to the South Sea scheme: the whole nation became stock-jobbers and projectors: every day produced new proposals,* some of apparent importance and utility,

* The reader will find near two hundred of these bubbles enumerated in Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. 3. p. 103.

others so absurd and futile, that their success was matter of surprise, and almost exceeds credibility. So prevalent was this rage, amongst persons even of the highest rank, that the prince of Wales was induced to become governor of the copper company. In vain Walpole and Compton, endeavoured to dissuade him from this act of degradation, by representing, that he subjected himself to a prosecution, that he would be reviled in parliament, and that the *Prince of Wales's bubble* would be hawked about in Change alley. Their remonstrances had no effect; the prince became governor, but afterwards, on receiving notice that a prosecution would be commenced against the company, withdrew his name, with a gain of £. 40,000.*

These delusive projects received their first check from the power to which they owed their birth: The directors of the South Sea company, jealous of their success, and desirous to monopolize all the money of the speculators, obtained writs of *scire facias* against the conductors of bubbles, and thus put an end to them. But in

Amongst the most absurd may be mentioned, projects, For transmuting quicksilver into a malleable and fine metal.—For importing a number of large jack-asses from Spain, in order to propagate a large breed of mules;—and for trading in human hair. But the most impudent and barefaced delusion was, that of a man who advertised, that upon payment of two guineas, the subscribers should be entitled to a hundred pound share, in a project which should be disclosed in a month; the extreme folly of the public was such, that he received a thousand of these subscriptions in one day, and then went off.

* Secretary Craggs to Earl Stanhope, July 12th. Correspondence, Period III.

opening the eyes of the deluded multitude, they removed the main prop of their own tottering edifice. Suspicion once excited was not to be suppressed, and the public, no longer amused by pompous declarations, and promises of dividends, which could never be realized, declined all farther purchases of stock, which fell in less than three weeks to 400, and those who had bought at large premiums were involved in distress and ruin. Amongst the numbers who suffered by these speculations, were not only persons of the first rank, but merchants and traders of every class, and bankers, who having advanced the monies committed to them, on the subscription receipts, by their temporary stoppages augmented the general calamity.

When the public distress was arrived to a most alarming height, and despair pervaded all ranks of people, to Walpole every eye was directed, as the only person capable of affording assistance, under the pressure of immediate necessity. When the aid of the bank became necessary to preserve the South Sea company from ruin, he was called from the country, and importuned to use his interest with the governors, in favour of a proposal made by the South Sea company, to circulate a number of their bonds. At this awful moment the clamour of distress was irresistible, and the bank, after great reluctance, arising from a natural dread of being involved in the same ruin which threatened the company, was at length induced to listen to the proposals. Walpole was present at several con-

ferences between the committees of the two companies, and drew up, in the first conference, a minute, well known afterwards by the name of the Bank Contract, specifying the agreement of the bank to circulate three millions of South Sea bonds for one year, on certain conditions, which were settled at a subsequent meeting. The report of his * interference, and the intended aid to be given by the bank, occasioned a temporary rise in the South Sea stock; but the public was in such a state of terror and agitation, and so desperate was the situation of the South Sea company, that any community of interests between the two companies, was considered as fatal to both. Accordingly such a demand was made on the bank, that the governors refused to abide by the terms of their agreement; alleging, that it was deficient in legal validity.†

The critical state of the nation having rendered the immediate presence of the king necessary, he hastily quitted his German dominions, and landed at Margate, on the 9th of November. But his presence had not the desired effect. South Sea stock, which at the king's arrival was at 210, fell in a few days to 135‡. The public now looked with anxious expectation for the assembling of parliament, which was to meet on the 25th of November;

* Political State.

† True State of the South Sea Scheme.—Some Considerations concerning the Public Funds, p. 88, 91.—Tindal.

‡ Political State.—Tindal.

yet the difficulties under which the ministry laboured, to form a proper scheme for remedying the national distress, occasioned its farther prorogation to the 8th of December.

Nor is it a matter of wonder that the ministry were alarmed, and uncertain what measures to pursue. England had never experienced so total a destruction of credit; never was any country in a more violent paroxysm of despondency and terror. The South Sea company was considered as the sole cause of all the national misfortunes; the directors were indiscriminately loaded with execrations, and devoted by the public voice to condign punishment. Those who had promoted the scheme were involved in the same general detestation. The king, in addition to the odium of being a foreigner, and governed by foreign counsels, and of increasing his own dominions in Germany, at the expense of England, was now reviled for having favoured the South Sea act. Well-founded suspicions were entertained, that his German ministers and mistresses had received enormous largesses in stock, to recommend and promote the project. Most of the principal ministers of the English cabinet, Townshend excepted, were accused of being implicated in the same scandalous traffic, either by themselves or their relations, and had totally forfeited the public opinion.

Idle reports were circulated, and believed, that Sunderland* was endeavouring to prevail on the

* Letters from Count Bernsdorf, and other Hanoverian ministers, among the Townshend Papers.

king to marry the duchess of Kendal, with a view to diminish the influence of the prince of Wales; and that he was following the example of his father with James the Second, in driving his master to such acts of unpopularity, as might cause a deposition, and establish a republic on the ruins of the throne. A general outcry prevailed, that the king and ministers had leagued with the South Sea company to dupe the nation, and that the remedy for these enormous evils, would be more dangerous than the disorder itself.

The public discontents increasing, some of his Hanoverian counsellors suggested the rashest measures.* They advised the king to affect a resignation of the crown to the prince of Wales, and insinuated, that William, his great predecessor, had surmounted the factions of the time by threatening to retire, and leave the country to its fate. As a last and desperate effort, he was recommended to apply to the army, to sound the officers, many of whom it was said, had declared, that rather than submit to the establishment of a commonwealth, or a popish competitor, they would assist to render the crown absolute. Others were alarmed, and dreaded a misunderstanding between the king and the parliament: they deprecated any attempt to apply to the army, opposed the resignation of the crown, by insinuating, that it was

* Letters from Count Bernsdorf, and other Hanoverian ministers, among the Townshend Papers.

not the first time, a king of England had ruined himself by retiring, with the hope of quelling the fury of the populace; and advised rather, that secret applications should be made to the Emperor and the other allies, for troops, if necessary, to defend his person against any rebellious attempt.

In this alarming crisis, the king was pensive and desponding, uncertain how to act, and by whom to be directed.

Fortunately, in this moment of suspense and agitation, the public voice called forth Walpole, as the only man who was able to save the nation from impending destruction. In conjunction with Townshend, he stood at the head of a large party, highly respected for their *tried* integrity; among whom the names of Cavendish and Russel were most conspicuous, who had uniformly acted with him; while the dukes of Newcastle, Bolton, Grafton, and many other Whigs, who had united with Sunderland, were ready to join his standard. He was attached to government by the office of paymaster of the forces; but as he had scarcely taken any part in public transactions, he did not share with the administration the general odium. He had acquired great popularity by his uniform opposition to the South Sea act, and by having predicted the evils which were now most severely felt.

Walpole now possessed the power, had he felt the inclination, to ruin the South Sea company, the directors of which had treated him with many marks of contempt and obloquy, and to wreak

his vengeance upon its principal contriver, Sunderland, who by his cabals in 1716, had driven him and Townshend from the helm of government.* He was not ignorant that the Hanoverian junto were dissatisfied with Sunderland, who had not fulfilled his promises of obtaining the repeal of the incapacitating clause, and when he was reproached for the breach of his word, had excused himself by alleging, that Walpole, on whom he had relied for carrying the measure through the house of commons, was no longer in administration. Walpole, therefore, was secure of their co-operation, if he had deigned to make overtures to them. He also well knew, that Sunderland had principally promoted the South Sea act, for the purpose of securing, by largesses of stock, a majority in both houses of parliament. He was aware that the minister never cordially coalesced with him and Townshend, and that as soon as he had strengthened his party by their means, he would obtain their dismission.

The situation of the South Sea company, the popular outcry against the directors, and the general distress of the nation, afforded sufficient excuses for justifying a refusal to undertake this arduous business.

But Walpole was not of a vindictive temper; he cheerfully sacrificed his own resentment, and came forward to assist in relieving his country from the general calamity. He was fully aware of the numerous embarrassments which opposed

* Letter from Wm. Pulteney. Correspondence, Period III.

success. To him was enjoined the difficult task of preserving the honour of the king, which seemed contaminated by the notorious avarice and venality of his German followers; of counteracting the unpopularity of the minister, by whose authority and influence the South Sea bill had been framed and carried; of satisfying the sufferers, who loudly appealed for indemnification, without detriment to the public; of drawing the difficult line between too much lenity and too much severity; of reconciling the people to the king, and of calming the discontents, which threatened tumults and insurrections. He did not, however, shrink from the trial; but engaged in the task with that ardour and assiduity which marked his character. After examining various proposals, which were submitted to his consideration, he adopted a plan for ingrafting a certain portion of the South Sea stock in the bank and East India company; the first hint of which was suggested by Jacombe,* under secretary at war. Having amended the scheme in several instances, and prepared it for public deliberation, he referred it to the king, in a letter,† in which, after expressing his strong sense of the difficulties which he had to encounter, he declared, that he engaged in the undertaking solely in obedience to his majesty's command. The king and cabinet having ratified the scheme,

* Jacombe's Letter to Robert Walpole, October 11. Correspondence, Period III. and Walpole's Speech, at the end of this chapter.

† Correspondence, Period III.

and the monied part of the nation having sanctioned it with their approbation, he came prepared to submit it to parliament.

The moment in which it was publicly known that Walpole, in conjunction with Townshend, was employed on a scheme for the restoration of public credit, a new spirit and resolution seemed to be infused into the nation. The country revived from its late despondency; and his ability for finance was so thoroughly appreciated, that a proposal which he made to the minister on the 19th of November, being agreed to, had an instantaneous effect, and raised the stock from 125 to 200.*

On the meeting of parliament, Walpole had many difficulties to surmount, before he could venture to lay his plan before the house. One of the greatest arose from the zeal of those who were more remarkable for integrity than judgment; whose indignation urged them to adopt such violent resolutions, as without producing any essential benefit to the sufferers, would have occasioned a total destruction of public credit.

This vindictive spirit displayed itself in the first debate which took place on the king's speech, December 8. Pulteney having moved for an address, assuring his majesty that the commons would at this critical juncture proceed with all possible care, prudence, and temper, to inquire into the causes of the present misfor-

* Letter from William Pulteney to Daniel Pulteney, Correspondence, Period III.—Political State, 1720.

tunes, and apply the proper remedies for restoring and fixing public credit upon such solid foundations, as might effectually give ease and quiet to the minds of his majesty's subjects: Shippen proposed an addition, after the words, "for restoring public credit," "as far as it is consistent with the honour of parliament, the interests of the nation, and the principles of justice." This amendment being warmly seconded, occasioned a violent debate, in the course of which the directors were stigmatised with the most opprobrious epithets. Several of the members urged the most bitter invectives against the act for vesting such extensive powers in a set of men, whom they called miscreants, the scum of the people.* Sir Joseph Jekyl hoped that all the directors were not equally culpable, but sure he was, that some who were not directors were highly criminal; and he trusted that a British parliament would not want a vindictive power to punish great national crimes. Lord Molesworth owned that there were no laws in being to punish the South Sea directors; but contended that the example of the Romans ought to be followed, who, because their laws were defective, in not having provided a penalty for parricide, made one to punish the crime after it had been committed, and adjudged the guilty wretch to be sewed up in a sack, and thrown alive into the Tyber. He concluded, "that as he looked upon

* T. Brodrick's Letters. Correspondence.

the contrivers and executors of the South Sea scheme, as the parricides of their country, he should be satisfied to see them undergo the same fate."*

In the height of this altercation, Walpole remarked, that it was imprudent to begin the sessions with irritating questions before they examined the cause; that if the city of London was on fire, all wise men would rush forwards to extinguish the flames, and prevent the spreading of the conflagration, before they inquired who were the incendiaries. In like manner, public credit having received a most dangerous wound, and being still in a bleeding condition, they ought to apply a speedy remedy; and afterwards they might inquire into the cause of the calamity. "For my part," he continued, "I never approved the South Sea scheme, and am sensible it has done much mischief: but since it cannot be undone, it is the duty of all good men, to assist in retrieving it: with this view, I have already bestowed some thoughts on a proposal to restore public credit, which, in a proper time, I will submit to the wisdom of parliament."† This mild exhortation calmed the house, and the amendment was negatived by a majority of 261 against 103.‡ But on the next day, the temper of the house appearing more inclined to severity, he did not attempt to oppose the prevailing spirit; and an addition to

* Political State.—Chandler.

† Political State, vol. 20, p. 561.

‡ Journals.

the address, " for punishing the authors of our present calamities," being moved, was carried without a division.

In these debates, it appeared, for the first time, that party had no concern; Whigs and Tories could not be distinguished by their votes. These partialities were suspended, and almost annihilated by various other passions, which produced numberless intrigues. Many of the commons were deeply touched with the public calamities, or moved by their own private losses: others, dissatisfied with the ministry and court, were pleased to have an opportunity of covering their revenge, with the specious pretence of justice and the public good. Some wished, by their loud and bitter complaints, to increase their own importance, or draw the attention of the opposite party; others, engaged in the secret practices of the South Sea, hoped, by an affected severity, to prevent suspicion. Some also concealed, under the appearance of zeal and indignation, their devotion to several of the principal managers.* The party hostile to the established government took advantage of the public indignation, and excited the most violent clamours against those who, like Walpole, opposed extreme severity, and laboured to mitigate the spirit of revenge. Their views were directed to increase confusion and inflame discontent, with the hopes of procuring a majority of the disaffected in the new parliament, and by means

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 379.

of popular insurrections, to hasten the restoration of the Pretender. Such were the views and temper of parties in the house of commons, which Walpole had to encounter, and such was the spirit of discontent which he had to allay, before he could carry any scheme into execution; and yet it was in the midst of these discordant sentiments, and this petulant opposition, that by means of consummate prudence and management, he gradually brought the house to reason and discretion.

A committee was appointed, on the 9th of December, 1720, to take into consideration the state of public credit on the 15th; but on the 12th it was moved, that the directors should forthwith lay before the house, an account of all their proceedings. This motion being warmly seconded and supported, was opposed by Craggs, Lord Hinchinbroke, and the two Walpoles. The previous question being called for against this delay, Sir Richard Steele argued, that this nation, which two years ago possessed more weight and greater credit than any other nation in Europe, was reduced to its present distress by a few cyphering cits, a species of men of equal capacity, in all respects, (that of cheating a deluded people only excepted) with those animals who saved the capitol; men, who were now to be screened by those of greater figure, for what reason they best knew, others were at liberty to judge. In reply to an argument against the question, that this vindictive justice so much contended for, would not be effectual,

because it would be impracticable to procure a true account of the delinquents' estates, another urged, that all the laws against bankrupts enacted into one against the directors (for so he should call them, as a word that conveyed more obloquy than any other expression) would, in his opinion, attain the end proposed.* Horace Walpole, in speaking for the previous question, confessed that the South Sea scheme was weak in its projection, villainous in its execution, and calamitous in its end; but that, in his opinion, they ought to begin with applying a remedy to the evil. Walpole himself did not attempt to defend the directors; but said, "that as he had already declared, he had passed some time upon a proposal for that purpose; he was, however, apprehensive, that if they went on in a warm, passionate way, the scheme might be rendered altogether impracticable. He therefore desired that the house would proceed regularly and calmly, lest by running precipitately into odious inquiries, they should exasperate the distemper to such a degree, as to render all remedies ineffectual."†

In reply to this exhortation to mildness, Sir Joseph Jekyl enforced, with uncommon animation, the necessity of an immediate inquiry. He urged the absurdity of attempting a cure before they were acquainted with the disorder; and expressed a conviction that the

* T. Brodrick to Lord Middleton, December 13.—Correspondence, Period III.

† Political State for December 1720.—Chandler.

wisdom of the house would not want schemes to apply proper remedies. Walpole, finding that this speech had made a deep impression, did not insist on the previous question, and suffered the original motion to pass without a division. Several resolutions were accordingly carried, ordering the directors to deliver in an account of all their proceedings in relation to the execution of the South Sea act.

So great was the impatience of the commons, that on the 14th, complaints were made against the dilatoriness of the directors; on the 15th some of their accounts were laid before the house; on the 19th, Sir Joseph Jekyl moved for a select committee to inquire into all the proceedings relating to the South Sea act. The motion, however, was dropped, at the representation of Walpole, who observed, as on a former occasion, that public credit being in a bleeding condition, a speedy remedy should be applied, and therefore any delay would be highly dangerous. This was immediately followed by invectives against stock-jobbers, to whose arts the public calamity was imputed; and a vote passed, without opposition, "that nothing can tend more to the establishment of public credit, than preventing the infamous practice of stock-jobbing."*

After passing this vote, which was on the 20th formed into a bill, Walpole ventured to sound the temper of the house, in regard to the

* Political State for December.

main question on which his scheme was founded. It was to facilitate the reduction of the national debt, by retaining that part of the South Sea act which would assist in promoting this end, and his speeches were uniformly directed to enforce this beneficial purpose. But a mistaken principle of justice and compassion seemed likely to prevent the success of his scheme, or at least retard its effects. With a view to alleviate the sufferers, it was proposed, among other things, to annul the contracts made by the South Sea company, to declare the subscriptions void, and to restore the proprietors of the public debts to their former state, or in other words, to leave the debt of the nation on the same footing on which it stood before the opening of the second South Sea subscription. To enforce this proposal, petitions were presented to the house from several proprietors of the irredeemable debts and lottery tickets, "praying that their case might be taken into serious consideration, and that they might be defended in their just rights against the illegal proceedings of the South Sea company, by forcing them to take stock for their debts, at a much higher rate than it would sell for; and admit them to be heard either by themselves or counsel, or grant them such other relief, as should be thought fit." This petition was warmly supported by Sir Joseph Jekyl, under the patriotic pretence of asserting public faith, equity, and justice, which had been notoriously violated by the directors.

In opposition to this specious, but impolitic proposal, Walpole explained the views with which the South Sea act was framed, which were, to promote the landed and trading interest of the nation, by lessening the incumbrances, and reducing them to a method of being discharged in a few years. This salutary benefit would not, he added, be effected, unless a way had been found to make the annuities for long terms redeemable, which had been happily effected by the South Sea scheme, without a breach of parliamentary faith; and if they should now unravel what had been done they would not only ruin the South Sea company, but, instead of alleviating, aggravate the present misfortunes. He added, "if any injustice is done to the subscribers, they are at liberty to seek relief by law."* He then claimed the attention of the committee, and said, "I have prepared a scheme for restoring public credit, but the execution of it depending upon a position which has been laid down as fundamental, I think it proper, before I open the scheme, to be informed, whether I may rely on the main foundation, that *the subscriptions of public debts and incumbrances, money subscriptions, and other contracts made with the South Sea company, shall remain in the present state?*" This was the cause of two long and violent debates, after which it passed in the affirmative, by a majority of 232 against 88, with a reservation in these words, "unless altered

* Political State, vol. 20, p. 586.

for the ease and relief of the proprietors, by a general court of the South Sea company, or set aside by due course of law."*

Having thus gradually smoothed his way, and obtained the avowal of the commons, that the subscriptions of the proprietors should be considered as valid, he, on the 21st, brought forward his scheme: it was, in substance, to engraft nine millions of stock into the bank of England, and the same sum into the East India company, on certain conditions; the remaining twenty millions were to be left to the South Sea company. In his speech, recommending this plan, Walpole studiously avoided the introduction of speculative topics, or assertions which were not proved by papers before the house. He frequently repeated, that he founded his calculations on the veracity of those statements,† and by his prudence in that respect, silenced many cavils which must necessarily have arisen from assertions less closely connected with obvious and attainable proof. After a few objections made by Hutcheson, and some other members, it was ordered, that proposals should be received from the bank of England, and the East India company, for restoring public credit. It met however with a warm, but fruitless opposition from the three companies, because neither derived from it any peculiar advantage; their pro-

* Journals.—Chandler.—Political State.—Brodrick's Letters. Correspondence, Period III.

† Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, 22d December. Correspondence, Period III.

posals were presented to the house, and a bill framed accordingly. In its passage through the commons, it was, in some respects, altered and amended; but the principal features were preserved. The chief management of the business was committed to Walpole, and though it was violently* opposed in its progress, yet his prudence and discretion either gave way to the general clamour, and submitted to various amendments; or his weight and eloquence, aided by the influence of government, obtained a majority in its favour: it passed the house of lords, and on the 22nd of March, received the royal assent.

The good effects of Walpole's scheme were counteracted by the petulant opposition of the advocates for indiscriminate severity, and many unjust sarcasms and violent invectives were thrown out against its author. Amongst others, Shippen, the inflexible opposer of lenient measures, observed, April 25, that the house had hitherto done nothing towards the restoration of public credit: that indeed, a member of great parts and abilities had, at first, proposed a scheme for that purpose; but instead of proving an effectual remedy, it appeared at last to be a mere palliative, which had rather inflamed than alleviated the distemper. That by this time the whole injured nation called aloud for vengeance;

* January 3, on the first reading, 165 to 118.—January 5, on the motion for adjourning the report, 153 against 140.—January 10, against re-committing it, 267 to 134,—February 7, on the second reading, 237 to 139.

and if they neglected to hear the voice of the people, it would look as if they had a mind to provoke them to do themselves justice.* It was ever his opinion, that the only effectual means to restore credit was, to call those to a strict account, who had ruined it; and in particular all such as had applied any part of the public money, intrusted in their hands, in stock-jobbing, and had raised vast fortunes by robbing the nation. He then moved for an inquiry what public money had been employed in stock-jobbing, or in the purchase of annuities, or other parliamentary securities, by any officer of the revenue, to their own private advantage, since the first day of December, 1719. Sir William Wyndham seconded the motion, and after animadverting on the profuse expenditure of the public money, and allowance of arrears, due to foreign troops, in British pay, moved for copies to be laid before the house, of the several warrants and sign manuals, by virtue of which the late commissioners appointed to examine the debts of the army, issued certificates.

Walpole having expressed his surprise and stated his objection to this motion; Lechmere observed, that he was neither for or against it, but he would freely tell the gentleman who opposed it, that while the nation was under the pressure of heavy debts, he must expect that many motions would be made, for the purpose of finding out methods to ease the public bur-

dens. That as that gentleman was now in a higher post than formerly, a great deal more was expected from him; the rather, because the scheme which he had proposed at the beginning of the session, for raising the stocks, and restoring public credit, had not had the desired effect. Walpole, moved at this invective, could not contain his indignation. "It is known," he replied, "that I ever was against the South Sea scheme, and have done all that lay in my power to hinder its taking place; but when the mischief was done, and things were brought to such extremities, I thought it my duty, and therefore was willing to try the best method I could devise to extricate the nation out of its difficulties. I do not pretend *to work miracles*, but only to use my utmost endeavours towards retrieving the late misfortunes. With this honest intention I promoted a scheme which had been laid before me,* and which appeared the most plausible of any then proposed, for restoring public credit. It cannot be denied, that while that scheme was pursued, it did some good, and kept up the price of stocks; and that they have fallen since it has been laid aside. I never intended however to raise stocks above their intrinsic value, for that would bring us again into the same unhappy circumstances which their extraordinary rise had before occasioned." He then lamented the ill disposition of some persons who, instead of concurring with

* By Jacombe, under secretary at war. See note, p. 25.

others in remedying the present distempers, used all possible means to irritate the minds of the people; and concluded with a motion for appointing a day to consider the state of public credit, which was unanimously approved.

Although the engrafting scheme was not carried into execution, and was superseded by * the bill which passed at the close of the session for restoring public credit; yet it produced a beneficial effect, by calming the general discontents; and inducing the proprietors of the national debt, who had severely suffered from the South Sea infatuation, to form hopes of relief from the efforts of parliament.

Journals.—Political State for April 1721, and Chandler.

CHAPTER 21.

1721.

Public Indignation against the Directors—Proceedings in Parliament—Report of the Committee of Secrecy—Rigorous Treatment of the Directors—Bill of Pains and Penalties—Moderation of Walpole—Defends Charles Stanhope—Saves Sunderland—Promotes the Bill for restoring Public Credit—Advantages finally derived from the South Sea Scheme—Arrears of the Civil List paid—Controversy concerning the Bank Contract.

DURING the period in which this scheme was carrying through both houses of parliament, the loudest and most violent clamours were excited as well against the directors, as against the ministers who had promoted the South Sea act, which was considered as the sole cause of the national distress. The general infatuation in favour of the South Sea company was forgotten; and the frenzy of stock-jobbing was not taken into consideration. All the managers were indiscriminately involved in the same guilt; the very name of a director was deemed synonimous with every species of fraud and villany. Petitions from counties, cities, and boroughs, in all parts of the kingdom, were presented to the house, crying for justice due to an injured nation against the villany of these peculators, and the sufferers looked up for in-

demnification in the confiscation of their property, or for vengeance in the punishment of their guilt. All those who, like Walpole, opposed extreme severity and indiscriminate punishment, were exposed to repeated insults and virulent invectives; they were devoted, both in anonymous letters and public writings, to the speedy vengeance of a much injured people.

The popular frenzy seized parliament, and influenced its proceedings. On the recess, the house was divided into two parties; the one for applying an immediate remedy to the distress occasioned by the South Sea act, was superior to that for inquiring into the causes of the national misfortunes, and punishing the authors, as the most effectual means of redressing them. To the preponderant party Walpole inclined; and his opinion had great weight in inclining the decisions of the house to the lenient side. But at the meeting after the recess, on the 30th of April, the vindictive party gained the ascendancy; and strong censures were thrown out against some of the leading members of administration. Walpole soon perceived the general inclination of the house. Conscious that all attempts either to persuade or oppose, could only serve to inflame their resentment, and deriving a warning from the intemperate heat of secretary Craggs, he took but a small share in the debates which related to the inquiries into the South Sea project, and the conduct of the directors.

A committee of secrecy being appointed by

the commons, January 23, 1721, to examine all the books, papers, and proceedings relating to the execution of the South Sea act, the members* were chosen from the most violent advocates for indiscriminate and unrelenting severity. Alarmed at these proceedings, Knight, cashier of the company, who alone was privy to all the secret transactions, escaped from England, soon after his first examination, carrying with him the register called the green book, and it was generally suspected, that he took this step with the connivance of government. The committee having reported this event to the house, the commons ordered the doors to be locked, and the keys laid on the table. General Ross then stated, that the committee had discovered, "a train of the deepest villany and fraud hell ever contrived to ruin a nation, which, in due time, should be laid before the house." In consequence of this vague assertion, four of the directors, who were members, were expelled the

* This Committee was composed of the following persons:

Thomas Brodrick, chairman.

Archibald Hutcheson,	Lord Molesworth,
Sir Joseph Jekyl,	Col. Strangways,
Edward Wortley,	William Sloper,
Sir Thomas Pengelly,	N. Lechmere,
William Clayton,	General Ross,
Edward Jefferies,	Hon. Dixie Windsor.

The heat and violence of Brodrick in this inquiry, are sufficiently shown in his letters: (See Correspondence, Period III.) And the vindictive and acrimonious spirit of the majority of the committee is apparent in their speeches and motions on the subject, in Chandler, the Political State of Great Britain, &c.

house, and taken into custody. The other directors shared the same fate; all their books, papers, and effects were seized, and on the 25th of January the royal assent was given to a bill, for restraining them from leaving the kingdom, discovering their estates, and disqualifying them for holding offices in any of the companies.

If any thing could justify these extraordinary acts of rigour, it was the report of the secret committee, which on the 16th of February being presented to the house, exposed a scene of fraud and iniquity almost unparalleled in the annals of history. The committee stated that their inquiry had been attended with numerous difficulties; that in the different books were made false and fictitious entries; entries with blanks, erasures, and alterations, and in some, the leaves were torn out. Some books had been destroyed, others secreted.

Before the South Sea bill was passed, and with a view to promote it, the directors, to whom the secret management was principally intrusted, had disposed of a fictitious stock to the amount of £.574,000; this stock was noted as sold at several days, and at various prices, from 150 to 325 per cent. amounting to £.1,259,325. It was to be esteemed as holden of the company, for the benefit of the pretended purchasers, though no mutual agreement was then made for the delivery or acceptance at any stated time; no money was deposited, and no security given for the payment. By this contrivance, no loss

could have been sustained, if the stock should fall, and the gain would be received, if it should rise.

As this fictitious stock was designed for promoting the bill, the sub and deputy governors, Sir John Blunt, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Chester, Mr. Holditch, and Mr. Knight, the cashier, had the chief disposal of it, and it was distributed as follows:

	£.
To the earl of Sunderland, at the request of Mr. Craggs, senior	50,000
The duchess of Kendal	10,000
The countess of Platen	10,000
Her two nieces	10,000
Mr. Craggs, senior	30,000
Charles Stanhope, esquire	10,000
The sword blade company	50,000

It also appeared, that Charles Stanhope had received a difference of £. 250,000, through the hands of Sir George Caswal and Co. but that his name had been partly erased from their books, and altered to *Stangape*. That Aislabie, chancellor of the exchequer, had an account with Turner, Caswal, and Co. to the amount of £.794,451; and that he had advised the company to make the second subscription £.1,500,000, instead of a million, by their own authority, and without any warrant. That of the third subscription, Aislabie's list amounted to £. 70,000, Sunderland's to £.160,000, Craggs's to £.659,000, and Stanhope's to £.47,000. That on the pawned stock which had been sold, there was, by the means of Mr. Knight, a deficiency of £.400,000.

This report was succeeded by six others, less important; at the end of the last, the committee declared that the absence of Knight, who had been principally, and often solely intrusted, put a period to their inquiries into this black and destructive affair.

In consequence of the first report, the house passed several strong resolutions. A bill was then brought in for the relief of the sufferers by the South Sea company, the title of which, on the third reading, was changed into "a bill for raising money on the estates of the sub and deputy governors, directors, cashier, deputy cashier, and accountant of the South Sea company, and of Mr. Aislabie and Mr. Craggs, towards making good the damages sustained by the company; and for disabling such of those persons as were living, to hold any place, or sit in parliament for the future." In consequence of these resolutions, the greater part of the estates belonging to the directors, and to other persons mentioned therein, were confiscated to a very large amount, and applied towards discharging the debts of the company. The estates of the directors alone were valued at £.2,014,123, the allowance made to them was £.354,600; the confiscation, therefore, amounted to £.1,659,523. Yet these enormous forfeitures did not satisfy the unrelenting advocates for extreme severity, many of whom expected nothing less than confiscation of all * their property, and

* Insult was sometimes added to confiscation. On the motion for allowing Grigsby £.10,000, whose estate was valued at £.31,687,

several were dissatisfied, because the punishment of death was not inflicted.*

An eminent historian has justly remarked, that "the equity of modern times must condemn the arbitrary proceedings which disgraced the cause of justice, by introducing a bill of pains and penalties, a retroactive statute, to punish offences which did not exist." "Against a bill of pains and penalties," he observes, "it is the common right of every subject to be heard by his counsel at the bar; they prayed to be heard, their prayer was refused; and their oppressors, who required no evidence, would listen to no defence." †

Walpole however is exempted from this just censure. We have already mentioned his endeavours to stem the torrent of parliamentary vengeance, and to incline the sentiments of the house to terms of moderation; and although the current of opinion ran violently against lenient measures; yet he did not shrink from avowing his sentiments, when any flagrant act of injustice was about to be committed. Thus, when a motion was made for declaring the estates of Craggs liable to the same forfeitures as those of

a member observed, that since that upstart had once been so prodigally vain as to bid his coachman feed his horses with gold, no doubt he could feed on it himself; and therefore he moved that he might be allowed as much gold as he could eat, and that the rest of his estate might go toward the relief of the sufferers. Political State. June 1721.

* Saint John Bredrick to Lord Middleton, May 24. Correspondence.

† Gibbon's Memoirs, p. 11.

the directors, and his two sons in law, who were both members of the house, requested to be heard by counsel in right of their wives, as daughters of the deceased; he strenuously spoke in their favour. For his interposition he incurred censure, and was ironically complimented by Lechmere, as being fully capable to advise them, and to serve them as counsel; an office he had already performed for so many others. Walpole finding that all appeals to reason and equity were ineffectual, and not willing to irritate the house, prudently returned no answer to this sarcasm, and the request was withdrawn.

At another period, when the directors prayed also to be heard by counsel, Walpole, though he avowed himself conscious that any thing which might be interpreted in favour of a South Sea director, would be very ill heard, and subject the speaker to great disadvantages; yet he defended their petition upon the just and obvious principle, that no criminal, however great, ought to be condemned unheard, or deprived of any advantage in making his defence.

The part of these transactions which involved Walpole in the greatest embarrassment, was the necessity of defending the ministry against those attacks to which their conduct exposed them, but which, had they been too closely scrutinised, would have occasioned discoveries extremely dangerous in the irritated state of the public mind, and produced changes portentous of the greatest mischief. Charles Stanhope, on the

28th of February, had been charged by the report of the committee, with having taken, through Knight, £.10,000 stock, without any valuable consideration, and with having bought, through Turner and company, £.50,000 stock, at a very low price, by the difference of which he had gained £.250,000. In proof of these averments, the examinations of Sir John Blunt, Holditch, Sawbridge, and Henry Blunt, were read, and they were interrogated at the bar, but their testimony rather detracted from, than strengthened their former depositions; and it was apparent as to the £.10,000, that Stanhope had received no stock without a valuable consideration, and that as to the £.50,000, his name had been used without his privity or consent. Yet the house was so little satisfied with this exculpation, that though Walpole and his brother Horace exerted great ability in his defence, he was acquitted by a majority of three only, 180 to 177.*

Aislabie's case was so flagrant, and his criminality verified by so many proofs, that, on his first accusation in the house of commons, March 8th, neither Walpole or his friends attempted to defend him. He was expelled from the house, and committed to the Tower. But when the bill was introduced for subjecting his estates in common with those of the South Sea directors, Walpole observed, that impeaching, not billing ministers, was the parliamentary rule of our ancestors, treated the bill as a bill of attainder,

* Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, March 7. Correspondence, Period III.—Political State.—Chandler.—Tindal.

and made a strong appeal to the compassion of the house, in favour of his wife and family.* Failing in these efforts, he moved, that such parts of his property as had been in his possession towards the end of the year 1719, before the South Sea bill was brought in, might be exempted from confiscation. This was, however, over-ruled, and it was finally carried, that all the estate which he possessed on the 20th of October 1718, should be allowed to him and his family.

To preserve Sunderland from the same censure which had involved Aislabie, and would have involved secretary Craggs, had he lived, was the great object of the court. But as he was accused by the secret committee of having received, through Knight, £.50,000 fictitious stock, without having made any payment, or given any security; and as the parliament had in many instances taken presumption for guilt, and appearances for realities, it was no easy matter to turn the sense of the house in favour of the minister, who sat at the head of the treasury when the South Sea act was framed and carried. Under these inauspicious circumstances, Walpole, however, obtained the acquittal of Sunderland.

That part of the report which related to lord Sunderland, being proposed to be taken into consideration, was adjourned till the 15th of March, at the pressing instances of Walpole,† as

* Brodrick's Letters. Correspondence. † Ibid.

necessary for the farther information of the house; that several witnesses who had been examined by the committee, should be re-examined at the bar, as they might vary in their depositions, to give a different explanation to the words which they had made use of in their examination. Having obtained this point, the object of which was to delay the business, for the purpose of gaining over several of the Whigs, he represented to them, that if they gave their votes against Sunderland, and he was disgracefully removed, their cause would suffer, and the Tories be called into power. These representations had a due weight, and brought over many to his purpose. The proof of the fact rested principally on the assertion of Knight, given on the oath of Sir John Blunt, who, as president of the company, could not be supposed ignorant of the transaction; and who deposed to his having heard the particular declarations of Knight, that such stock had been taken, and a note of acknowledgment given by Sunderland. Of five directors examined at the bar, one could only affirm, that he was alone with Knight, when it was communicated to him; and two others acknowledged that Knight had informed them of the said circumstances in presence of Sir John Blunt, but could not positively ascertain whether he was within hearing. Walpole, who in a previous debate on the case of Charles Stanhope, had endeavoured to weaken the evidence, and illiberally exposed the character of Sir John Blunt as a fraudulent projector, pur-

sued the same line of conduct with increased asperity. He declared himself authorized by Sunderland to deny the fact and to avow that no such stock had been taken in his name, and no such note given, and reprobated the idea, that hearsay evidence should operate to the ruin of the fortune and character of any man.

To Walpole Sunderland was indebted for his acquittal. His personal weight, his authoritative and persuasive eloquence, were effectually employed on this occasion, and, aided by the influence of government, met with success. The minister was acquitted by a majority of 61 votes, 233 against 172.*

Having obtained the acquittal of Sunderland, and secured the continuance of the Whig administration, of which he soon became the head, the great object of Walpole was to promote the restoration of public credit, which was in danger of being diminished, if not overturned, by the violent proceedings of the commons. In this delicate business he acted with his usual prudence, and though he could not in all instances prevent the adoption of measures which

* Chandler.—Although the public voice, notwithstanding his acquittal by so large a majority, criminated Sunderland; yet several extenuations may be urged in his favour. For it appears from private documents which have casually fallen under my inspection, that so early as July, he had refused to recommend to the directors any more lists for subscriptions; that he did not at least enrich himself or his friends; that he expressed great satisfaction, that neither himself or his friends had sold out any South Sea stock, as he would not have profited of the public calamity.—Letters from Eckersal and Drummond to Daniel Pulteney, Correspondence, Period III.

he did not approve; yet he mostly contrived either to delay their execution, or to mitigate their effect by various expedients.

As chairman of the committee, he drew up the address of the commons to the king. It represented the state of public credit, and recited perspicuously, in a full though summary manner, the confusion and mischiefs which were derived from the execution of the fatal South Sea scheme. It described the cause of those mischiefs, explained the difficulty of applying proper remedies, and mentioned certain resolutions which had passed for re-establishing public credit, remitting £.4,156,341, to the South Sea company, dividing all the remaining capital stock among the proprietors, and preventing stock-jobbing. These resolutions were made the foundation of an act that passed under the title of "a bill for making several provisions to restore the public credit, which had suffered by the frauds and mismanagements of the late South Sea directors and others."

In the passage of the bill through the commons, a bold attempt was made to obtain its rejection, or to frustrate its effects. Though the general disposition of Walpole was mild and temperate, yet in this instance, when threats were employed to awe the legislative body into a compliance, he stood forth the supporter of parliamentary freedom. On the day in which the bill for restoring public credit was to be read a second time, the lobby of the house of commons, and the adjacent places, were filled with pro-

prietors of the short annuities and of other redeemable debts, who tumultuously demanded justice of the members as they were passing, and put into their hands a printed letter to a member of parliament, in which "the unreasonableness and partiality of binding down the redeemables are fully demonstrated," and a written paper, containing these words; "pray do justice to the annuitants, who lent their money on parliamentary security." The justices of peace for the city of Westminster, and the constables, were instantly summoned, and the house proceeded to business. Sir John Ward presented the petition from the proprietors of the redeemable funds, praying to be heard by themselves or counsel against the bill. The petition being laid on the table, the bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed. Sir John Ward then spoke in favour of the petition, and was seconded by Sir Gilbert Heathcote. Walpole observed, that he could not see how the petitioners could be relieved; that the resolutions on which the bill was founded had been approved by the king and council, and been agreed to by a great majority of the house; he therefore moved for the previous question, and for adjourning the debate. Brodrick warmly opposed the original motion, and was strenuously seconded by Sandys; but the question for adjournment was carried by a majority of 78 to 29. Meanwhile the tumult continuing, the justices of peace were commanded by the speaker to disperse the rioters,

which they effected not without some difficulty, and after reading the riot act. Many exclaimed as they retired, "You first pick our pockets, and then send us to gaol for complaining." On the following day the bill was laid before the committee, and, after some warm debates, in regard to the price at which the holders of the said subscriptions should take South Sea stock, and the repeal of a clause for compelling the bankers to restore the whole money they had borrowed, which Walpole successfully opposed, was carried in the affirmative, and ordered to be engrossed. On the 7th, it was read the third time, passed, and sent to the lords, and on the 10th received the royal assent.*

This bill for the restoration of public credit, arranged the affairs of the South Sea company in such a manner, that five millions of the seven, which the directors had agreed to pay the public, were remitted. The incumbrances were partly discharged from the confiscation of the forfeited estates; the credit of their bonds maintained, £.33. 6*s*. 8*d*. per cent. were divided among the proprietors. The company was soon in a situation to fulfil its engagements with the public, and two millions were reserved towards the liquidation of the national debt; but the proprietors made such loud and repeated complaints on the hardship of depriving them of these two millions, that the parliament afterwards remitted that sum, which made an addition of £.6. 5*s*. per cent.

* Journals.—Political State for July and August.

The spirit by which Walpole was directed, and the principles by which he acted, during the whole progress of this delicate business, are laid down in the speech from the throne, on the prorogation of parliament, which he drew up.

"The common calamity, occasioned by the wicked execution of the South Sea scheme, was become so very great before your meeting, that the providing proper remedies for it was very difficult; but it is a great comfort to me to observe, that public credit now begins to recover: which gives me the greatest hopes that it will be entirely restored, when all the provisions you have made for that end, shall be duly put in execution. I have great compassion for the sufferings of the innocent, and a just indignation against the guilty; and have readily given my assent to such bills as you have presented to me, for punishing the authors of our late misfortunes, and for obtaining the restitution and satisfaction due to those who have been injured by them, in such a manner as you judged proper. I was at the same time willing and desirous, by my free and general pardon, to *give ease and quiet to the rest of my subjects, many of whom may, in such a general infatuation, have been unwarily drawn in to transgress the laws.*"*

Thus at length, by the ability, address, and perseverance of Walpole, the fatal project of the South Sea was converted into a national benefit; the distresses are forgotten, and the advantages

* Journals.

remain. Although by the remission of the seven millions, the public did not enjoy all the benefits which had been sanguinely expected; yet much greater advantage was derived than is usually supposed: £.632,698 of long and short annuities were converted into redeemable stock, which at this time bears an interest of only 3 per cent. and the interest on the company's capital was reduced at Midsummer 1727 to 4 per cent. By this the public gained annually £.339,631, which, calculated at 25 years purchase, was worth above 8 millions. This reduction was also productive of great use and national advantage; it was a precedent for future arrangements of a similar nature, and in 1724, £.3,775,027 was also reduced to 4 per cent.*

In the midst of these distresses, from the decline of public credit, and dearth of money, the enormous profusion of Sunderland's administration, laid Walpole under the necessity of applying to parliament for discharging the debts of the civil list, amounting to £.550,000. To propose the imposition of new burthens on the people for the discharge of these arrears, in this moment of general calamity, would have been extremely unpopular, and perhaps not practicable. Walpole, therefore, devised an expedient which effectually succeeded, without an additional tax on the public: it was, to make the civil list discharge its own arrears, by deducting sixpence in the pound on all payments from the

* Sinclair on the Revenue, vol. 2, p. 106.

crown, towards raising a fund for liquidating the interest of the sum required. The proposal being, on the 12th of July, laid before a committee of the whole house, Pulteney, who though not in opposition, yet began to be dissatisfied with the administration, moved for a deduction of one shilling in the pound, adding, that if this deduction were too much for the present occasion, it might be applied to the discharge of the civil list debts; it was carried by 153 voices against 63.* On the 14th, this resolution being submitted to the house, was opposed with greater effect by the friends of administration, and negatived by a majority of 132 against 83.† The original proposition was then moved, and passed without a division, "That his majesty should be enabled to raise any sum not exceeding £.500,000, to discharge the arrears and debts due and owing upon the civil list to his servants and others, by settling a yearly fund for payment of annuities, after the rate of five pounds per cent. per annum, out of the civil list revenues, until the same shall be redeemed by the crown; and that his majesty, his heirs and successors, be enabled to make good, for the uses of the civil government, all such money as from time to time shall have been paid thereupon, by causing a deduction, not exceeding sixpence in the pound, to be made out of salaries, wages, pensions, or other payments from the crown."‡ Thus Walpole arranged this

* Political State for July 1721. † Chandler.
‡ Journals.—Political State.—Chandler.

delicate business, which he was often heard to say * gave him much embarrassment, and on the successful issue of which he prided himself as much as on any other financial operation, which he effected during the course of his administration.

The whole conduct of Walpole in the South Sea business, was sanctioned by both houses of parliament, and approved by the nation in general. No invective was thrown out against him, even by party, except that he had employed the power of government and his own influence in *screening* Sunderland; and that he had endeavoured to prevent the justice of the nation from overwhelming the projectors of the fatal South Sea scheme. For this cause, he was invidiously reviled in the periodical writings and pamphlets of the times, and Saint John Brodrick, in a letter to the lord chancellor Middleton, laments that the interposition of Walpole, whom he stigmatises by the name of the *Screen*, saved the directors from confiscation and hanging. But at the distance of fourteen years, the opposition accused him of having fraudulently proposed the bank contract, and of deluding the unhappy sufferers with false hopes of relief. It was asserted that he took a scandalous advantage of the general calamity, and made the misfortunes of his country the means of enriching himself; that he had concerted the project several months before with the bank, and that to

* From Lord Orford.

engage the governors consent, he gave them private assurances of being released from their engagement, should it prove unfavourable.

This attack on the character of Walpole was managed, in the Craftsman, and other antiministerial writings,* with all the art and strength which could be supplied by the sophistry of Bolingbroke, and the wit of Pulteney. The charge was also rendered more plausible by the concurrence of Aislabie, who, in conjunction with secretary Craggs, had been considered as the principal manager of the business on the side of government, and was present at the meeting in which the contract was signed. This heinous charge was answered by the minister himself, and by the writers † in his interest. Without entering into a tedious inquiry on this subject, or attempting to justify the conduct of Walpole in every particular, I shall observe, that on a candid review of the whole controversy, it appears that an accusation urged *for the first time* fourteen years after the fact, when it was impossible for him to recollect all the circumstances, and to justify every part of the transaction, was malicious in itself, and undeserving of credit. It may be also remarked, that the assertions of Aislabie cannot be admitted as fair evidence in his own cause; and that he falsely arraigned the minister, may be implied from a

* Case of the Sinking Fund, Craftsman for 1735.

† Some Considerations on the Public Funds, Gazetteer for 1735, passim.

private letter * written in 1722, in which he frankly confessed his own folly and weakness in promoting the South Sea scheme, and expressed, in the strongest terms, his gratitude for the kindness and lenity shown to him by government, which he solely imputes to the interference of Walpole.

In regard to the most heinous part of the charge, that he had first induced the bank to accede to the agreement, and "afterwards released them from the obligation, when his own private purposes were served;" the bank contract, it was answered, being precipitately drawn up in the midst of general alarm and despondency, and at the earnest importunity of the ministry and South Sea directors, there could be no collusion betwixt him and the bank; and no blame could attach to him, because the governors refused to fulfil the terms of an agreement which they had reluctantly acceded to, and which if they had fulfilled, would have involved the bank and South Sea company in equal ruin.

It must not be omitted, that soon after the bank contract was drawn, and the ingraftment scheme had passed, he was accused *of favouring the bank, in preference to the South Sea company*, that he might sell out the money he had in the bank at an advanced price. However, as in reply to this attack, he had publicly declared in the house of commons that he had not one

* Correspondence, Period III.

penny in the bank at that juncture, but possessed a large stock in the South Sea company, his opponents afterwards, in 1735, reversed the accusation, and declared that he had adopted those measures to *favour the South Sea in preference to the bank*, that he might sell out the money he had in that stock at an advanced price. These two contradictory assertions destroy each other, and prove the weakness of both.

CHAPTER 22.

1721—1722.

Townshend appointed Secretary of State on the Death of Earl Stanhope, and Walpole First Lord of the Treasury on the Resignation of Sunderland—Supports the Swedish Subsidy—Affairs of Sweden to the Peace of Nystadt—Domestic Transactions—Commercial Regulations—Abolition of various Duties—Importation of Naval Stores encouraged—Advancement of national Industry—Dean Tucker's Eulogium of Walpole—Influence and rivalry of Sunderland—His death.

THE death of earl Stanhope, which happened Feb. 4, 1721, and the accusation of Sunderland, opened the way to the re-establishment of Townshend and Walpole in their former places: for although Sunderland had been acquitted by a considerable majority, yet the public opinion was too unfavourable for him to be continued in the office of first lord of the treasury. The negociation for settling the new administration had been entrusted, by Devonshire and Townshend, to the management of Walpole; and it was not without great difficulty that Sunderland, who maintained unbounded influence over the sovereign, had been induced, or rather compelled, to consent to the proposed arrangement, and particularly to relinquish the disposal of the secret service money;* but he at length acceded.

* Pulteney's Answer to one Part of a late infamous Libel, p. 55.

Townshend had been appointed secretary of state on the 2nd of April. Methuen was made comptroller of the household, Walpole first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, and a new board, consisting of his confidential friends,* was nominated at his discretion.

Almost the first measure of government which Walpole supported in the house of commons after his elevation, seemed to belie his conduct while in opposition; for which he has been bitterly reproached by those writers who perceive no difference between opposing a treaty before it is concluded, and supporting the national honour by adhering to it when ratified.

The death of Charles the Twelfth was the prelude to the pacification of the north; and changed the situation of Sweden, as well as the system of English politics in that quarter. On that event, Charles Frederick duke of Holstein Gottorp, the son of Hedwige, eldest sister of Charles was the next heir; and if hereditary right had prevailed, would have succeeded to the throne. But the preponderant party in Sweden, espoused the pretensions of Ulrica Eleonora, youngest sister of the deceased monarch, who was married to Frederic prince of Hesse Cassel.

The news of the king's death having reached Stockholm, the senate repaired to the apartment of Ulrica, and congratulated her on her acces-

* George Baley, Sir Charles Turner, Henry Pelham, Richard Edgecumbe.

sion to the throne;* at the same time the new queen declared her consent to renounce that absolute power which Charles the Eleventh had vested in the crown, and which had proved the source of many calamities to Sweden. Her title was soon afterwards acknowledged by the army, in opposition to the duke of Holstein, who laid claim to the throne as his right by hereditary descent; and the pretensions of his rival were confirmed by the states, which assembled at Stockholm on the 20th of January 1719. In that assembly, count Horn, a nobleman of great distinction and capacity, observed in full senate, and in the presence of the queen, with whom he had concerted the declaration, that both Ulrica and her sister Hedwige had forfeited their title to the crown, because their marriages had not been confirmed by the states. On the meeting also of the states, Ulrica delivered a memorial, in which she disclaimed all pretensions, and that the throne being vacant, they might proceed to an election. On this formal renunciation, Ulrica Eleonora was elected by the states, and gave her consent to the new form of government, which rendered the sovereign of Sweden, from the most absolute, the most limited monarch in Europe. The new queen, or rather the senate, which possessed the whole power of government, had sufficient occupation to deliver the country from the dreadful situation to which it had been reduced by a war of twenty years, and

* Lagerbring Hist. de Suède.

to conclude terms of pacification with Hanover, Prussia, Denmark, Poland, and Russia.

Before the death of Charles the Twelfth, a congress had been held in the Isle of Aland, between the Swedish and Prussian plenipotentiaries. Had the Swedish monarch lived, Baron Gortz would have reconciled Peter and Charles, both equally incensed against George the First; and a combined army of Swedes and Russians, after conquering Norway, would have landed in Scotland for the purpose of placing the Pretender on the throne of Great Britain.

On the death of Charles, George, though involved in disputes with Spain, yet secure of France, dispatched Carteret and Bassewitz to break up the congress of Aland, and prevent the pacification between Russia and Sweden; from a dread, lest their union should render his mediation unnecessary, and induce Sweden to decline confirming the cession of Bremen and Verden. Carteret succeeded in his negociation, and is applauded, though not without regret, by the Swedish historians,* for the consummate address with which he prevailed on Sweden to conclude a separate peace with Hanover, which was followed by a subsidiary alliance with England, under the mediation and guaranty of France.

Before the pacification was finally concluded, Sweden suffered severely for breaking off the congress of Aland. The Danes took Marstrand,

* Lagerbring, Hist. de Suède.

the Gibraltar of the north, and threatened Gotheborg. Forty thousand Russians landed in different parts of Sweden, and carrying havock and destruction into the kingdom, reduced eight towns, and above 1,300 villages to ashes.* The arrival of the English fleet put a temporary stop to this invasion, and hastened the peace of Sweden with Hanover, Prussia, and Denmark. Carteret, supported by the presence of an English fleet in the Baltic, gained Sweden † by promises to assist in wresting from Russia the conquered provinces, and prevailed on her to confirm the cession of Bremen and Verden to Hanover; Stetin and the district between the Oder and Plene, to Prussia; to renounce the claims of exemption from the Sound duties, and to engage not to assist the duke of Holstein, should he attempt the recovery of Sleswic. Denmark gave back to Sweden Marstrand, Stralsund, and the Isle of Wismar for 600,000 rixdollars, relinquished her alliance with Russia; and, as an indemnification for the conquests restored, England and France gratified Denmark by guarantying Sleswic. ‡

Peter, insensed at these treaties, which exposed him singly to the united forces of Sweden and England, did not lose courage; but continued his invasion of Sweden, which the English fleet could not prevent; he also arrested the English merchants who were settled in his dominions, and his resident in London delivered a

* Schmidt Russ. Gesch. vol. 2. p. 308.
† Lagerbring. ‡ Mallet, Hist. de Danuemarc.

strong memorial against the insolent interposition of Great Britain.

In consequence of the Russian invasion, Sweden had recourse to England for assistance. The king sent a fleet into the Baltic on the 19th of June, and applied to parliament for a subsidy of £.72,000, according to the terms stipulated by the treaty of alliance. The motion to make good these engagements was violently opposed in the house of commons by Sir William Wyndham, Shippen, and lord Molesworth, who had long resided in Denmark, and who published an excellent account of that kingdom. He ably contended, that the alliance was contrary to former treaties with Denmark and Russia; that it was unjust to insist that Peter should restore his conquests, while other princes retained the spoils of Sweden; and that the only equitable mode of proceeding was, for Prussia to restore Stetin, and the elector of Hanover, Bremen and Verden. He artfully insinuated that the claim to Mecklenburg was one of the causes which occasioned the rupture with Russia; he urged that England ought not to intermeddle with the affairs of the empire, and that the procuring of naval stores was the principal advantage of our trade to the Baltic. To these strong arguments Walpole could only reply, that the subsidy allowed to Sweden and the mission of the squadron to the Baltic had been stipulated by former engagements, which, if not fulfilled,

* Journals.—Chandler.'

would affect the national honour. But the chief motive which induced the parliament to grant this subsidy, was the declaration that another would not be demanded, as the preliminaries between Russia and Sweden were wholly settled; yet so strong were the objections to hostilities against Russia, that the motion for the subsidy was only carried by a majority of 59.*

Sweden deriving no effectual assistance from England, was compelled to receive the terms of peace dictated by Russia; and Peter, refusing to accept the mediation of a power which had offended him, granted, in September under the guaranty of France, the peace of Nystadt. Sweden ceded to Russia Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, part of Carelia, and the district of Viborg in Finland. In return, Peter restored the remaining part of Finland, paid 2,000,000 rixdollars (£.500,000) as an indemnification for Livonia, and promised not to interfere in the domestic concerns of Sweden.

During these transactions, Ulrica Eleonora had resigned the crown in favour of her husband Frederic the First, who purchased his election by confirming all the limitations of prerogative to which the queen had consented. This transfer of the crown occasioned many discontents, increased the Holstein faction, gave to Peter the Great the means of gaining a strong party in the senate, and enabled him to foment the

* Journals.—Chandler.

internal discontents natural to a popular government; it exposed the country to future conflicts in the north, and entailed on the British administration, a series of complicated and difficult negotiations.

Walpole had scarcely settled the business of the South Sea, and restored public credit, before he turned his attention to trade and manufactures, and gave a convincing proof of his liberal and extensive views. On being again placed at the head of the treasury, he found the foreign trade shackled with petty duties and impoverishing taxes, which obstructed the exportation of our manufactures, and reduced the importation of the most necessary commodities. Walpole framed the noble plan of abolishing at once all these restrictions, and giving freedom to the most valuable branches of our external and internal commerce.

The speech delivered from the throne on the 19th of October, 1721, at the opening of the seventh and last session of this ever memorable parliament, in conformity to this plan, is justly praised by Uztariz,* an eminent Spanish writer, as a model of good sense and liberality. It was drawn by Walpole, and contains the great outlines of the salutary plan which he had formed for the extension of trade.

"In this situation of affairs, we should be extremely wanting to ourselves, if we neglected to improve the favourable opportunity which

* Uztariz, Theory and Practice of Commerce, ch. 28. vol. 1. p. 131.

this general tranquillity gives us, of extending our commerce, upon which the riches and grandeur of this nation chiefly depend. It is very obvious, that nothing would more conduce to the obtaining so public a good, than to make the exportation of our own manufactures, and the importation of the commodities used in the manufacturing of them, as practicable and as easy as may be; by this means, the balance of trade may be preserved in our favour, our navigation increased, and greater numbers of our poor employed. I must therefore recommend it to you, gentlemen of the house of commons, to consider how far the duties upon these branches may be taken off, and replaced without any violation of public faith, or laying any new burthen upon my people. And I promise myself, that by a due consideration of this matter, the produce of those duties, compared with the infinite advantages that will accrue to the kingdom by their being taken off, will be found so inconsiderable, as to leave little room for any difficulties or objections.

"The supplying ourselves with naval stores upon terms the most easy and least precarious, seems highly to deserve the care and attention of parliament. Our plantations in America naturally abound with most of the proper materials for this necessary and essential part of our trade and maritime strength; and if, by due encouragement, we could be furnished from thence with those naval stores, which we are now obliged to purchase, and bring from foreign

countries, it would not only greatly contribute to the riches, influence, and power of this nation, but, by employing our own colonies in this useful and advantageous service, divert them from setting up, and carrying on manufactures which directly interfere with those of Great Britain."*

In consequence of this recommendation, one hundred and six articles of British manufacture were allowed to be exported, and thirty-eight articles of raw materials to be imported, duty free.

The other great object recommended in the speech, which regarded the importation of naval stores from the American colonies, was effected in the same sessions. It had long been a matter of complaint, that the importation of naval stores, which were principally drawn from the Baltic, was clogged with numerous duties, and that the articles were raised to an enormous price. It was found, on inquiry into the commerce with Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and the Hanseatic towns, that the imports exceeded the exports to the amount of more than £.200,000; it was proved that since the Russia company had engrossed the trade to that country, the price of tar had been doubled, and it was likewise notorious, that the supplies of naval stores might be prohibited, should England be at war with Russia; and the Czar, with a view to increase his own navy, insist that naval stores should only be exported in Russian vessels. It

* Chandler, vol. 6, p. 263.

was an obvious remark, that since these commodities were necessary for the navy, it was impolitic to be at the mercy of a foreign prince, especially as we might be supplied from our own plantations on easier terms, and in exchange for our own manufactures. Such were the motives which induced Walpole to countenance a bill for encouraging the introduction of naval stores, and for granting bounties and premiums to the importers, from our colonies in North America.

It is the observation of a judicious writer,* that the advancements which have been made in shipping, commerce, manufactures, and in all kinds of industry, since the passing of this law, have been prodigious; and it cannot be denied, even by the bitterest enemies of the minister, that this national improvement was principally due to his liberal and enlarged spirit. He adds, "I am persuaded, impartial posterity will acknowledge, that if ever a statesman deserved well of the public, Sir Robert Walpole was that man." And yet none of the English historians have paid a due tribute of applause to these beneficial exertions of ministerial capacity. While some of them enter, with a tedious minuteness, into a detail of foreign transactions, and echo from one to the other the never-failing topic of Hanoverian influence; while they dwell with malignant pleasure on those parts of his conduct, which in their opinion, prove the

* Tucker's Theory of Commerce, p. 149. printed, but never published.—Anderson on Commerce.—Chalmers's Estimate, p. 96.

ascendancy of influence and corruption; while they repeat the speeches and reproaches of opposition, they suffer these salutary regulations, which ought to render the name of Walpole dear to every Englishman, to be principally confined to books of rates and taxes, and only to be mentioned by commercial writers.

Although Sunderland had resigned all his official employments, yet he still retained his influence at court, and never heartily coalesced with the new ministers. He had obtained the appointment of lord Carteret to be secretary of state in the place of Craggs, who died on the 16th of February, and the presidentship of the council for lord Carleton, in preference to the duke of Devonshire, who was supported by all the influence of Townshend and Walpole. He fomented a division in the cabinet, and carried several points in opposition to the other members.

The conduct of Sunderland at this period, is involved in so much mystery, as to leave his character open to every suspicion. It is impossible to ascertain to what fatal purpose he meant to employ his ascendency over his sovereign, or to what extremes he might have been driven by his disgust against the prince of Wales. He intrigued with the Tories,* and made overtures to bishop Atterbury. He proposed, at a time when the ferment occasioned by the South Sea scheme was at its height, to dissolve the parliament, and induced the king to sanction his

* Walpole Papers.

views, by persuading him that there was not money sufficient in the treasury, to secure the return of a Whig majority, and that the Tories, under his influence, would screen the projectors of the South Sea, and suppress all inquiry on the subject. But this dangerous and insidious proposal was over-ruled by the sagacity and intrepidity of Walpole, who represented the extreme danger and impolicy of the measure, and took on himself the charge of finding the sums necessary to support the Whig majority. * Sunderland did not dare to avow any intimate connection with, or preference of the Tories, and was obliged to yield to these arguments and assurances; but the Pretender and the Jacobites certainly, at this time, entertained the most sanguine hopes. Sunderland became a great favourite with them and the Tories, his health was constantly drank by them, † and they affected to be secure of attaining, by his means, the accomplishment of their wishes.

Not all the services which Walpole had performed to his king, to his country, not even his merit in screening Sunderland from the rage of the house of commons, could expiate the crime of having superseded him at the head of the treasury. Sunderland dreaded his abilities and popularity, and saw in him a rival not unlikely to acquire the full confidence and favour of the sovereign. Jealous of his growing power, he determined either to remove Walpole from his situation in the house of commons, or again

* Etough. † Secret Intelligence.—Townshend Papers.

to obtain his dismission. Under the semblance of favour, he requested the king to create him postmaster general for life; a lucrative office, which if he accepted would incapacitate him from a seat in parliament, and if he refused, would subject him to the resentment of his sovereign. Contrary, however, to his expectations, George inquired if Walpole had desired it, or was acquainted with it: Sunderland replied in the negative: "then," returned the king, "do not make him the offer, I parted with him once against my inclination, and I will never part with him again as long as he is willing to serve me."* This unexpected demur suspended the designs of Sunderland; and his death, which happened on the 19th of April, 1722, prevented his attempts to remove Walpole, which, considering his influence and ascendancy, might have been finally successful.

* Horace Walpole to Etough, July 31, 1731.

CHAPTER 23.

1722—1723.

Meeting of the new Parliament—Atterbury's Plot—Memoirs—Bill of Pains and Penalties—Conduct in Exile—Death—Tax on the Estates of Roman Catholics, and Non-jurors.

THE parliament, in pursuance of the opinion of Walpole, was not dissolved until the 10th of March, 1722, a few days before it would have died a natural death. The new parliament assembled on the 19th of October; and it soon appeared, that the promise of Walpole to obtain a majority of Whigs was fulfilled.

During the ferment of the general election, the plot of which bishop Atterbury was the head, was detected, and from the mention of it in the king's speech, it became the first object which engaged the attention of the legislature. As Walpole, from his situation and intelligence, procured the earliest information of this conspiracy, and took an active share in the prosecution, I shall throw together a few anecdotes of bishop Atterbury, and add such new information as can be derived from the Orford and Walpole Papers.

Francis Atterbury was born at Middleton, near Newport Pagnel, in Buckinghamshire, on the

6th of March, in 1662. He received his education at Westminster school, and was from thence elected a student of Christ Church College, Oxford. At both places he took indefatigable pains in improving himself, and at a very early period, was distinguished for elegance of taste, and knowledge of classical literature, which he displayed in a Latin version of Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel, and a translation of some odes of Horace. In the 24th year of his age he proved his talents in controversial writing, by vindicating Martin Luther, in a publication, which induced Burnet to rank him among those eminent divines who had signalised themselves by their admirable defences of the Protestant religion. On taking orders, he acquired a high reputation by his talent in preaching, and by supporting, against Hoadly and Wake, the doctrines of the high church. He obtained the favour of the queen, by an animated character which he drew of her in a sermon, preached on the day of her accession, and increased his favour by the consolatory address which he introduced in another discourse on the death of the prince of Denmark. Bred up in Tory principles, he wrote in favour of passive obedience, and displayed so much learning and ingenuity, that he was chosen prolocutor of the lower house of convocation, and chiefly managed the affairs in that assembly. A similarity of opinion induced him warmly to espouse the cause of his friend Sacheverel, and he is supposed to have had the principal share in drawing

up the masterly defence which the doctor delivered at his trial. He was first patronized by Sir Jonathan Trelawney, bishop of Exeter; appointed in 1704, to the deanery of Carlisle; and in 1711, by the Tory administration, removed to that of Christ Church; in 1713, he was advanced, at the recommendation of the earl of Oxford, to the bishopric of Rochester and held in commendam the deanery of Westminster. At that period he was in such high estimation with the queen and ministry, that he was not unfrequently consulted in points of the utmost importance. He was always inimical to the succession of the Hanover line, and, it is said, that on the death of queen Anne he offered to proclaim the Pretender, in his lawn sleeves, at Charing-cross; and when Ormond and Bolingbroke declined taking any vigorous step, he is reported to have exclaimed, "Never was a better cause lost for want of spirit!" It is certain that he was involved in the schemes of Bolingbroke, and a letter from that minister* soon after the queen's death, proves the extreme confidence reposed in him.

On the accession of George the First, he received evident marks of coldness from the new sovereign; and on the rebellion of 1715, gave an instance of his disaffection, by refusing to sign the declaration of the bishops, in favour of the crown. He uniformly employed his great eloquence in the house of lords, in opposing the

* Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2. p. 651.

measures of government, and in drawing up the most violent protests. Atterbury was of a restless aspiring temper, and eager to obtain the highest honours of the church, which he would certainly have acquired, had not queen Anne died. The active part which he had taken during her reign, against the succession of the house of Brunswick, and his uniform opposition to the government of the new sovereign, precluded him from all expectations of promotion. But when Sunderland courted the Tories, and made overtures to him as to the leader of the disaffected party, his conduct was so equivocal, that his friends † reproached him with having deserted his principles; and his enemies did not hesitate asserting that he had engaged in a conspiracy against the government, because his demand of the bishoprick of Winchester was rejected. There seems, however, to be no foundation for these reflections; it is probable, that in listening to the overtures of Sunderland, he conceived hopes, that the minister was inclined to promote the cause of the Pretender, and that Sunderland was duped by him, rather than that he was duped by Sunderland. Indeed, an anecdote which was communicated to me by his descendant, the Rev. Mr. Morice, proves the inflexibility of his character, and steady attachment to his principles. Just before his prosecution he was visited by Sir Robert Walpole, who offered him the bishoprick of Winchester, with the lucrative sinecure of Teller

* Prior to Swift, April 25, 1721.—Swift's Letters, vol. 2.

of the Exchequer, for his son in law, Mr. Morice, if he would discontinue his attendance in the house of lords. The bishop asked, "What excuse can I assign?" The minister replying, "Inability, from the gout," he added, "Alas, Sir! I have too much of that already."*

It appears from Sir Luke Schaub's correspondence from Paris,† that the first intimation of the conspiracy in which he was engaged, came from the regent duke of Orleans, to whom the agents of the Pretender communicated the plot, in hopes of obtaining his assistance from him.

In consequence of his full conviction of the truth and danger of the conspiracy, Walpole took an active share in conducting the prosecution. He first mentioned it to the house, when the bill for suspending the Habeas Corpus act was opposed, and a motion made to limit its duration to six months. This motion being strongly and ably seconded, seemed on the point of being carried, when Walpole laid before the house some particulars of the conspiracy; he said, "This wicked design was formed about Christmas last. The conspirators had at first made application to some potentates abroad, for an assistance of 5,000 men; and being denied,

* Communicated by the bishop to his son in law, Mr. Morice, when he came to the deanery, soon after the departure of Sir Robert Walpole. The circumstance seems to have been also known to Dr. Mess, if we may judge from a letter written to him by the bishop, dated June 6, 1722. Printed in Nichols's Collection.

† Hardwicke Papers.

they afterwards, about the month of April, made farther application, and earnest instances for 3,000. Being again disappointed in their expectations of foreign assistance, they resolved desperately to go on, confiding in their own strength, and fondly depending on the disaffection of England; and their first attempt was to have been the seizing of the bank, the exchequer, and other places where the public money was lodged. Although government had undoubted informations of this plot ever since May last; no person had been apprehended, because there being then two terms coming on together, they would have had the benefit of the *Habeas Corpus* act, and their arrest was deferred till the long vocation." He added, "The traitorous designs against his majesty's person and government had been projecting ever since the death of the late queen; and evident proofs would appear that there had been a meeting of some considerable persons, one of whom was not far off, wherein it had been proposed to proclaim the Pretender at the Royal Exchange. An exact account of this detestable conspiracy would, in due time, be laid before parliament." He concluded, by observing, "that although the *Habeas Corpus* act had never before been suspended for above six months; yet, as the lords had made this suspension for a whole year, if the commons should propose any alteration, it might occasion a difference between the two houses, which, at this time of jealousy and danger, might be attended with bad effects in

foreign courts."* Accordingly the bill was carried by a majority of 246 against 193.

Bills of pains and penalties passed against the inferior agents, Plunket and Kelly; and Layer having been tried and condemned, the bishop became the object of general attention. In consequence of the report from the committee, March 22nd, a bill was brought into the house of commons on the 25th, for subjecting him to banishment and deprivation. On receiving a copy, he wrote a letter to the speaker, requiring to have the assistance of counsel and solicitors in making his defence: having passed the commons on the 9th of May, it was sent up to the lords, and on the 11th, he was brought to the bar to make his defence. He made a long and artful speech himself, and his counsel, Sir Constantine Phipps and Mr. Wynne, displayed great zeal and ability; but the bill finally passed the lords on the 27th, and received the royal assent.†

The conspiracy in which Atterbury was concerned, and for which he was exiled, has shared the fate of many other plots which have not been carried into execution. It was at the time credited by one party, and disbelieved by the other; and even subsequent writers have, according to their principles, considered it as real or pretended. The public opinion of the minister is sufficiently known from the active

* Chandler.

† Journals.—State Trials.—Chandler.—Lords' Debates.—Tindal.—Speaker Onslow on Opposition, Correspondence, Period IV.

part which he took in discovering and counteracting the conspiracy; and his private conviction of Atterbury's guilt is proved by a confidential letter which he wrote to his brother Horace, then envoy at the Hague, about three months before Atterbury was arrested.*

It would be needless as well as tedious to canvass the principal arguments for or against bishop Atterbury. It will be sufficient to observe that the proofs of his guilt, though not derived from positive, but from circumstantial and presumptive evidence, were as strong as the nature of the case would admit; and considering the early period at which the plot was discovered, and the great art and talents of the culprit, were such as to stamp on the impartial mind, indelible conviction. It indeed strongly proved the lenity of government, that a bill of attainder was not brought in against him, and that he was only punished with deprivation and banishment.

The commitment of the bishop of Rochester to the Tower, had occasioned great clamours. Under pretence of being afflicted with the gout, he was publicly prayed for in most of the churches of London and Westminster,† and a print of him was circulated, in which he was represented looking through the grate of a prison, and holding in his hand a portrait of

* May 29th, 1722, Correspondence, Period III. vol. 2. p. 220.

† Political State, vol. 4. p. 21.

archbishop Laud, with some verses, commiserating his situation, and calling him

- - - - - - - - - - "a second Laud,
"Whose christian courage nothing fears but God."

It was also apprehended, that his removal to the ship which was to convey him into banishment, would have been the signal of insurrection, but no tumults took place. Walpole, in a letter to Townshend, dated Whitehall, June 20, 1723, thus speaks of his embarkation:

"The late bishop of Rochester went away on Tuesday. The crowd that followed him before his embarkation was not more than was expected; but great numbers of boats attended him to the ship's side. Nothing very extraordinary, but the duke of Wharton's behaviour, who accompanied him on board of the vessel, and a free conversation betwixt his holiness and Williamson:* with menaces of a day of vengeance."

Many reports have been circulated concerning the severity with which Atterbury was treated in the Tower; but upon a candid examination of the facts alleged by the bishop and his friends,† he does not appear to have undergone more rigour than a state prisoner accused of a treasonable conspiracy usually experiences. The

* Governor of the Tower.

† See a Letter from Atterbury to Lord Townshend, complaining that his daughter had not been permitted to visit him till after eight months confinement.

following instance of lenity is not generally known: He was arrested in August 1722: the articles of impeachment were brought into the house the 23d of March 1723, passed the house of commons on the 9th of April; he spoke in his own defence on the 6th of May, and on the 27th, the king gave his royal assent to the bill of pains and penalties. During the interval between his impeachment and condemnation, several chapters were permitted to be held, under his auspices as dean of Westminster, and the subdean was allowed to act as his proxy. During the month of May, not less than eight chapters were held for signing leases, and on the 31st, it was agreed, "That the lease of the manor of Pensham be *now* sealed and lie in the chapter clerk's hands, as an escrole, till the bills he has sent up for the fines are due and paid, this being the last chapter likely to be held till another dean be made, and that the present dean have his proportion of the fine."* This unusual mode of proceeding, by which a very considerable fine was, before payment, reserved for Atterbury, must have been entirely owing to the connivance of government; for it is a well known fact, that the bishop of Rochester had offended the chapter by his overbearing behaviour.

Atterbury received the tribute of applause from the first poets of his time. Swift, Pope, and

* I am indebted for the communication of these particulars, taken from the chapter Books to Dr. Moss, the late bishop of Oxford.

Gay have not omitted to pay high encomiums to his talents and learning. Gay observes, in his Epistle to Pope,

> " See Rochester approving nods his head,
> " And ranks one modern with the mighty dead."

Pope, in his Epilogue to the Satires, describes his unshaken firmness and resignation in the hour of prosecution:

> " How pleasing Afterbury's softer hour;
> " How shines his soul unconquered in the Tower."

Pope maintained a constant correspondence with him during his exile, and always expressed the highest sentiments of veneration and respect for his character. He almost idolised his banished friend, and was fully convinced of his honour and integrity, and that he was of a mind too noble to be impelled by the spirit of vengeance to cabal against his country.

How ignorant Pope was of his real character, and how much Atterbury belied his admirable portrait of a good and wise man in exile,* neither acting from a principle of resentment, nor impelled by revenge, was proved by his subsequent conduct. For he had no sooner landed on the Continent, than he threw himself into the service of the Pretender, and became the principal agent of his affairs, first at Brussels, and afterwards in France.

The advocates of Atterbury have in vain en-

* Letter from Pope to Atterbury, Pope's Works, vol. 5. p. 354.

deavoured to deny or palliate this fact; and to impress a belief that he never attempted to excite a rebellion in England. They have asserted, that for the purpose of avoiding solicitations from the Jacobites, he quitted Paris, and went to Montpellier in 1728, where he resided above two years:* but the contrary is proved from the most unquestionable evidence, from his private correspondence with the rebels in Scotland, in 1725, published by Sir David Dalrymple; from the repeated accounts transmitted by Horace Walpole, during his embassy at Paris; from the information of spies, who discovered his cabals, and from the correspondence between him and his son-in-law Mr. Morice, of which extracts are given in the second volume. It appears also, from his own account,† that he quitted the management of the Pretender's affairs in 1728, from disgust, and not from principle.

In fact, Atterbury was of too aspiring a temper to act a secondary part. He expected to have been the principal manager of the cabals in France, and to have been employed in carrying on the correspondence with the disaffected in England. But on finding that lord Mar and Dillon were more trusted than himself, he endeavoured to undermine their influence. With this view he entered into cabals with Murray and Hay, whose wife was the Pretender's mistress, and the cause that his consort, the princess Maria

* Miscellaneous Works of bishop Atterbury, by John Nichols.

† Letter from bishop Atterbury to Mr. Morice, Epistolary Correspondence, vol. 4. p. 161.

Clementina, had retired into a convent, and publicly demanded a separation. Although Atterbury was scandalised at the Pretender's inconsistent conduct, and disgusted with the influence of Hay; yet he meanly condescended to join intrigues with him and Murray, justified the Pretender, reviled his consort, and predicted that she would repent of her indiscretion, when her husband was restored to the throne of his ancestors; which event his sanguine expectation again led him to consider as not far distant. Having succeeded in destroying the influence of Mar and Dillon, he became jealous of Hay and Murray, reviled the Pretender, justified his consort, and retired from Paris, expressing a conviction that the follies and vices of his attainted sovereign excluded all hopes of effectually serving him. During his residence at Montpellier, he affected a love of retirement, and a fondness for the calm pleasures of a country life; but in the midst of these philosophical reveries, he did not relinquish his cabals for supplanting Hay and Murray, and after a year's continuance at Montpellier, returned to Paris for the purpose of completing his scheme.*

At this period his conduct was remarkable for duplicity. For while he seemed absorbed in projects for obtaining the ascendancy in the court of the Pretender, he was looking forwards to England with fond expectations of an act of grace. Soon after his return to Paris, he held frequent conferences in the Bois de Boulogne,

* Secret Intelligence from Paris; Orford and Walpole Papers.

with the duchess of Buckingham, natural daughter of James the Second, for the ostensible purpose of giving her advice concerning the education of her son. The real object of these conferences was not discovered until her arrival at Rome, when she prevailed on her brother, the Pretender, to remove Hay and Murray, and invest Atterbury with the principal management of his affairs in France. His sanguine expectations soon led him to anticipate the fall of Sir Robert Walpole, whom he always considered as the greatest support of the reigning family; and whose disgrace, he thought, would be followed by the ascendancy of the Jacobite party in England, and the restoration of the Stuarts.*

Notwithstanding his boasted philosophy, Atterbury passed his time in exile, in a manner which reflects no credit on the firmness of his mind, or the purity of his principles. The restlessness of his temper, his aspiring ambition, his constant cabals, his anxious desire to return, the narrowness of his income, compared with his former opulence, and the continual defection of his partizans in England, preyed upon a mind like his, fed with hopes which were constantly disappointed, and stung with resentment which could not be gratified. His situation was embittered by the ill conduct of his son, and by the death of his beloved daughter Mrs. Morice, who expired in his arms, and of which sad event he has given a pathetic account in a letter to

* Secret Intelligence from Paris; Orford and Walpole Papers.

Pope. He died at Paris, on the 15th of Feb. 173½, in the 69th year of his age.

One fact highly honourable to him, ought not to be omitted; he remained, at all times, true to the Protestant religion, and regular in the performance of its duties. He reprobated with warmth the conduct of the duke of Wharton, lord North and Grey, and others, who had sacrificed their religion with a view to obtain the Pretender's favour; he even quarrelled with the duke of Berwick, who proposed giving a Catholic preceptor to the young duke of Buckingham, and used his influence over the duchess, to place none but Protestants about the person of her son.

A short time before his death, Atterbury was alarmed, lest his papers should fall into the hands of government, and their contents should endanger some of his correspondents. Several of the most secret he destroyed, and with a view to secure the remainder, he applied to the English embassador, lord Waldegrave, to affix his seal on them, that they might be delivered to his executors.* But lord Waldegrave declined this delicate exertion of his diplomatic privilege, alleging that he was not entitled to the rights of a British subject. Atterbury then applied to the French government; but some difficulties arising, he withdrew his solicitation, and died before he had made an effectual arrangement. On his death, John Semple, a spy in the pay of government, who lived in habits of intimacy

* Correspondence, Period III. Article Atterbury.

with the bishop, endeavoured to obtain possession of the papers, for the ostensible purpose of forwarding them to the Pretender; but the friends of the deceased interposed; the papers were sent to the Scots College, and the seal of office affixed. Morice, his son-in-law and executor, obtained all those which related to family affairs, and the remainder were left in the college. On his return to England, his papers were seized, and Morice was examined before the privy council. Several of these documents, with the marks of office, are preserved among the Orford papers; they contain part of the correspondence between the bishop and his son-in-law, several miscellaneous articles in Atterbury's hand-writing, and some letters from William Shippen, relating to the character of Hampden, in Clarendon's History, which Oldmixon accused Atterbury, bishop Smalridge and Dr. Aldrich, of having interpolated, to which accusation the bishop published a satisfactory answer.* From these papers a selection of the most curious articles is given in the Correspondence.

The body of the deceased prelate was conveyed to England, for the purpose of being interred in Westminster Abbey. On its way the hearse was stopped, and the coffin opened, which occasioned a great outcry against the ministers, as if their vengeance continued to pursue him even after death; but it soon appeared that this indignity proceeded from the custom-house

* The Bishop's Vindication is printed in Atterbury's Epistolary Correspondence, by Nichols, vol. 3.

officers, who had information that a considerable quantity of brocades, and other prohibited goods, was concealed in the coffin. This search being effected, the hearse was suffered to proceed without molestation, and the body, after some difficulty, was buried in Westminster Abbey.

On the 23rd of November, soon after the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act, Walpole introduced a bill for raising £.100,000, by laying a tax on the estates of Papists, which was afterwards extended to all Non-jurors. The liberal spirit of the present age, condemns a measure which tended to increase the disaffection of a large body of subjects, and which the arguments advanced by the minister, were calculated only to palliate, but could not justify. For on being urged by several members, and particularly by Onslow, who declared his abhorrence of persecuting any set of men, on account of their religious opinions, Walpole represented "the great dangers incurred by this nation since the reformation, from the constant endeavours of Papists to subvert our happy constitution and the Protestant religion, by the most cruel, violent, and unjustifiable methods. He would not, he said, charge any particular person among them, with being concerned in this horrid conspiracy; but it was notorious that many of them had been engaged in the Preston rebellion, and some were executed for it; and the present plot was contrived at Rome, and countenanced in popish countries: many of

the Papists, he added, were not only well-wishers to it, but had contributed large sums for so nefarious a purpose, and therefore he thought it but reasonable they should bear an extraordinary share of the expenses to which they had subjected the nation."*

Whatever opinions may be formed of this measure, according to the strict rules of theoretical justice, the policy was unquestionable: for this instance of rigour effectually discouraged the Papists from continuing their attempts against the government, and operated as a constant check on the turbulent spirit of the Nonjurors.

* Chandler.

CHAPTER 24.

1723—1724.

Walpole's Son made a Peer—Character, Views, and Intrigues of Carteret:—Struggle in the Cabinet for Pre-eminence—Negociations with France—Contest for continuing or removing Sir Luke Schaub from Paris—Mission of Horace Walpole to Paris—Death of the Duke of Orleans—Successful Efforts of Townshend and Walpole—Schaub recalled, Horace Walpole nominated Embassador—Change in the Ministry; Carteret appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—Unanimity in Parliament—Walpole made Knight of the Bath and Garter.

ON the 10th of June, 1723, the king rewarded the services of Walpole, by creating his son a peer. Hitherto it had been customary for those who were intrusted with the chief direction of affairs, to be placed in the house of lords; and the same distinction had been offered to him; but conscious that his talents were best calculated for the house of commons, and that his consequence would soon decline if he were called to the upper house, he waived the dignity for himself, but accepted it for his son, who was created baron Walpole, of Walpole, in the county of Norfolk. The patent takes notice of this circumstance in a manner highly honourable to the minister: "Our most beloved and most faithful counsellor, Robert Walpole, first commissioner of the treasury, with the assistance of other select persons, and chancellor of our exchequer, having

highly recommended himself to our royal favour, by his many services to us, to our house, and to his own country, we did not think him unworthy to be advanced to the rank of the peers of this realm; but though he rather chooses to merit the highest titles than to wear them, we have however thought fit, in order to ennoble his family, to confer on the son the honour due to the father, and to raise to the peerage Robert Walpole, junior, esquire, &c."*

The deaths of Stanhope and Sunderland seemed to remove all obstacles to the power of Townshend and Walpole, who now became the great leaders of the Whigs, and being strictly united both in blood and interest, concentered in themselves the favour of the crown, and the confidence of their party. Yet notwithstanding these auspicious appearances, their authority was by no means established on a firm foundation; for besides the opposition, they had to struggle against lord Carteret, who covered, under the appearance of devotion and friendship, inimical designs, and united great talents with the most aspiring ambition.

John lord Carteret, was son of George lord Carteret, by lady Grace, daughter of John, the last earl Bath, of the line of Granville. He was born in 1690, and succeeded his father in the title when he was only in the fifth year of his age. He was educated at Westminster school, and removed to Christ Church College Oxford. He made such an extraordinary progress in his

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 494.

classical studies as induced Swift to reproach him, in his humorous style of panegyric, with having carried away from Oxford more Greek, Latin, and philosophy than became a person of his rank.* To classical erudition he united a knowledge of the modern languages, and every species of polite literature. Having taken his seat in the house of peers, he distinguished himself by an ardent zeal for the Protestant succession, and on the accession of George the First was appointed lord of the bed-chamber.

On the schism of the Whig ministry, in 1717, he attached himself to Sunderland; was appointed, in 1719, embassador extraordinary at Stockholm, concluded the peace between Sweden, Hanover, and Prussia, which finally annexed Bremen and Verden to the electorate of Hanover; and mediated a reconciliation between Sweden, and Denmark. Soon after his return to England, he was promoted, on the death of Craggs, to the post of secretary of state for the Southern department, and divided in the cabinet with Sunderland, to whom he owed his elevation, against Townshend and Walpole. He was esteemed one of the most eminent speakers in the house of lords, for dignity of manner, propriety of elocution, and force of argument, although his diction was often censured as too florid and metaphorical. He acquired great favour with the king, by his capacity for business and indefatigable application; by perfect

* Vindication of Lord Carteret, from the charge of favouring none but Tories, Swift's Works, vol. 10. p. 334.

knowledge of foreign affairs; by the facility of conversing in French, Italian, and Spanish, and by an acquaintance with the German, which he studied with a view to ingratiate himself still farther with his sovereign.

On the death of Sunderland, Carteret seems to have hesitated whether he should form, in conjunction with Cadogan and Carleton, a separate party, or coalesce with Townshend and Walpole. He was more particularly useful at this juncture, because he had succeeded to the influence which earl Stanhope possessed in the cabinet of Versailles, by means of du Bois, who was gratified with a large pension, and who had been raised, by the artful management of the earl of Stair, to the office of minister for foreign affairs. Du Bois being nominated to this post, contrived to appropriate to himself the management of the most secret transactions. All affairs of importance passed through his hands alone; and the members of the respective councils were dismissed.* Stair, who in the character of British embassador, had conducted the negociations at Paris with great address, having quarrelled with Law, who then directed the affairs of finance, and in conjunction with du Bois governed the regent, Stanhope himself repaired to Paris, and arranged in person with the regent and du Bois, the plan of future intercourse and correspondence. Stair was recalled, and succeeded by Sir Robert Sutton.† The

* Memoires de Du Clos, tom. 1. p. 408.

† Hardwicke State Papers, vol. 2. passim.

failure of the Mississippi scheme, which reduced France to a state of bankruptcy, and the disgrace of Law, increased the ascendancy of du Bois, and his nomination to the archbishopric of Cambray, was furthered by the express interposition of George the First.*

On the death of earl Stanhope, du Bois was under great alarm, lest the new ministers should not treat him with the same confidence; and was fully aware that his credit with the regent would cease, if the good understanding which had been recently maintained between England and France should be diminished. He was, however, soon undeceived. Lord Townshend, the new secretary of state, expressed his resolution in a letter to du Bois,† of maintaining the friendship between the two kingdoms, and paid particular compliments to him, as the person who had first promoted and concluded the alliance, which had been so highly beneficial to both parties.

On the death of Craggs, and the removal of Sunderland, the apprehensions of du Bois were again revived, by the reports of disunion in the British cabinet, and by exaggerated accounts of the desperate state of affairs in England, from the failure of the South Sea scheme. The regent also experienced the ill effects of these rumours, from the violent opposition made to his measures by the parliament of Paris, in conjunction with those who considered the alliance with England as no less dishonourable than detri-

* Du Clos. † Townshend Papers.

mental. For the purpose of removing these alarms, Sir Luke Schaub was deputed to Paris by Carteret. Schaub was a native of Basle, and became the confidential secretary of earl Stanhope, through whom his first correspondence and connexions with du Bois were principally conducted. On the reconciliation with Spain, in 1719, he was sent to Madrid, where he remained till the arrival of Mr. Stanhope, afterwards earl of Harrington. Soon after his return to England, he repaired to Hanover, and was employed by earl Stanhope in maintaining the harmony between the two courts,* and dispelling the doubts and suspicions which occasionally prevailed on both sides. On the death of Stanhope, he was considered by Carteret as the fittest person to repair to Paris.

The arrival of Schaub gave great satisfaction to du Bois, who placed no reliance on Sir Robert Sutton; and who expressed a conviction, that he should not long maintain his credit with the regent, if the confidence which that prince had hitherto reposed on the king of England should be destroyed. Schaub easily convinced the regent of the king's steadiness to his former engagements, and thus supported the authority of du Bois. Sutton was soon afterwards recalled; Schaub solely managed the affairs of England, and his influence increased, as du Bois was successively created, by the interposition of England, cardinal and prime minister. During

* Correspondence between Lord Carteret and Sir Luke Schaub, Hardwicke Papers, May 1722.

these transactions, Schaub became the channel through whom the cabals of the Jacobites, and the intrigues of Atterbury were communicated to the British cabinet.

Du Bois transferred his devotion to Carteret, as the minister who was supported by Sunderland, and who boasted that he had succeeded to the influence as well as to the principles of Stanhope. Schaub described him as the person who principally directed foreign affairs; and the friendship of du Bois, whose good-will at this period was highly prized, increased the consequence and promoted the interest of Carteret.

On the death of Sunderland, du Bois offered, through Schaub, to use his interest with George the First in favour of Carteret, but strongly advised him to coalesce with Townshend and Walpole, because he would on one side find it difficult to place himself at the head of the Whigs, and on the other, it would be dangerous to throw the king into the arms of the Tories.* In reply to these offers of assistance, Carteret expressed his gratitude to the cardinal, and informed Schaub of his previous resolution to act in that manner, as well with a view to promote the king's service, as his own particular interest. He boasted, that he was sufficiently strong to have no apprehensions; but those which arise from the common danger common to all ministers; he added, that his principles would never change, and intreated him to convince

† Correspondence between Lord Carteret and Sir Luke Schaub, Hardwicke Papers, May 1722.

the cardinal, that were he not fully persuaded of the good intentions of his colleagues, he would not continue long united with them.*

Notwithstanding these professions, Carteret never cordially coalesced with Townshend and Walpole. He considered himself as succeeding to the interests of Sunderland and Stanhope, expressed, in his letters and conversation, the profoundest veneration for their memory; headed the remnant of their party in the British cabinet, and caballed with the leaders of the Tories, whom he confidently assured of success, by declaring that he was supported by those who governed the king. He was led to make this declaration, which he implicitly believed, because he had secured the concurrence of Bothmar and Bernsdorf, and had gained the countess of Darlington, and her sister-in-law, the countess of Platen, whose influence in the Hanoverian councils he considered as predominant. With a view of effecting his purpose, he adopted a proposal, made by Schaub, of a marriage between Amalia, daughter of the countess of Platen, and the count de St. Florentin, son of the marquis de la Vrilliere, secretary of state, which was arranged under the condition, that George the First should obtain from the duke of Orleans, through the means of cardinal du Bois; a dukedom for the family of la Vrilliere. The king eagerly favoured the scheme, and likewise commissioned Schaub to use his name, provided he was secure that the request would

* May 4, 1722. Hardwicke Papers.

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not be rejected, and that du Bois could facilitate the grant of the dukedom, without offending those families who aspired to the same honour.

Having thus obtained the concurrence of the king, Carteret entertained the most sanguine expectations, that the management of this secret transaction, confined to him and Schaub, would increase his influence in the cabinet; yet as it was soon known to many persons, he was alarmed lest some rumours should be circulated, and he communicated a part of the business to lord Townshend, but contrived to retain the negociation entirely in his own hands. With that view he desired Schaub to confine the confidential account to his private correspondence, and in his ostensible letters, to touch upon that affair only in general terms, but to do it in such a manner and with such a *naïveté* as should make it appear as if he had not received any particular order on that subject.* These private communications were constantly shown to the king, who expressed his satisfaction in the highest terms of approbation.

Carteret also drew from the aspect of northern affairs, high expectations of increasing his influence, by fomenting the king's resentment against Russia, by flattering his inclination to interfere in the affairs of Sweden, and by favouring the opinions of those Hanoverian ministers, whose advice appeared to him to have weight in the counsels of the German cabinet.

* May 4, 1722. Hardwicke Papers.

Since the treaty of Nystadt, which restored peace to the North, the only subject of alarm, on the side of Hanover, was derived from the support which the Czar gave to the duke of Holstein, both in his attempts to obtain the crown of Sweden, and recover the duchy of Sleswic. Peter, proudly conscious of his strength and resources, and of the formidable marine which he had created in the Baltic, formed the most extensive designs of aggrandisement, and promoted every measure which might embarrass George the First. He had assumed the title of Emperor, which the European powers refused to acknowledge. He affianced his daughter Anne,* whom he probably designed for his successor, to the duke of Holstein, and sent to Copenhagen an embassador, to require that Sleswic should be restored to the duke of Holstein, and that his subjects, in the provinces conquered from Sweden, should be exempted from the payment of the Sound duties. When Frederic the Fourth rejected these demands, Peter, in 1721, fitted out a naval armament, assembled a body of troops on the frontiers of Courland,† and a new war seemed on the point of being kindled in the North. George the First, constituted by the treaty of Travendahl, a guarantee of Sleswic, was bound to succour his ally Frederic: he accordingly concerted the most efficacious means of defence; an English squadron again appeared in the

* See Travels in Russia, Book 4. chap. 10.

† Mallet, Hist. de Dannemarc.

Baltic, and joining the Danish fleet, suspended the operations of Russia, and Peter afterwards turned his views to Sweden, where the weakness of the government, and the fury of contending factions, gave the fairest prospects of success.

Such was the general state of Carteret's hopes and intrigues, when the king repaired to Hanover. Townshend had not forgotten that his removal, in 1716, had been principally owing to his continuance in England, by which means a full scope was given to the cabals of Sunderland, and the Hanoverian junta. He was unwilling to fall again into the same error, and therefore accompanied the king. Although it was unusual for both secretaries of state to be absent at the same time; yet Carteret had rendered himself so agreeable, and his presence was thought so necessary for carrying on the negociation with Schaub, relative to the marriage and the dukedom, that he received orders to repair to Hanover, and Walpole was appointed to act as sole secretary of state in England, during the king's absence.

Soon after their arrival at Hanover, the two secretaries of state made a violent struggle for pre-eminence.

Townshend had a difficult and a delicate part to act. He was conscious of Carteret's eminent abilities, and high favour with the king; he was not ignorant of his successful intrigues with Bernsdorf and Bothmar, and that he had conciliated lady Darlington and the countess of

Platen, whose influence he sufficiently appreciated. He was aware that Carteret was eagerly inclined to promote the king's German measures, and that he would be seconded in all his schemes, by the powerful co-operation of the Hanoverian ministers. He felt the necessity of employing intrigue against intrigue, and manœuvre against manœuvre; he laboured effectually to secure the duchess of Kendal, whose ascendancy over the king, fatal experience had demonstrated to be predominant; he fomented the jealousy which she had long entertained, lest the projected marriage should furnish the countess of Platen with a pretence for going to Paris, and from thence to England, and he succeeded so far in gaining her good graces, that he calls her, in his most private letter to Walpole, "the good duchess, and their fast friend." He also obtained the concurrence of her daughter lady Walsingham, who possessed great influence over the duchess, and no inconsiderable favour with the king. Relying on these supports, he procured the disgrace of Bernsdorf, and frustrated the intrigues of Bothmar, who made an unexpected visit to Hanover with a view of aiding Carteret. He obtained the appointment of Hartenberg to the post of minister of state; broke the union which had hitherto subsisted between him and the duchess of Kendal, and rendered them both subservient to his views. He counteracted Carteret in all his measures, secured the nomination of several places in opposition to his particular recommendation, and so triumphantly carried

all before him, that he boasted, in a letter to Walpole, of the success of his political campaign at Hanover, which, in stating the difficulty of his situation, he described as the only place in the world where faction and intrigue are natural and in fashion.*

The superior influence, however, of Townshend and Walpole, was not solely gained by court intrigues, or by the corruption of German favourites, and was not prostituted by a preference of Hanoverian interests to those of England. In the midst of these cabals, the conduct of the brother ministers was firm and manly, moving in direct opposition to the king's prejudices, and the wishes of the German junta. Townshend prevented the adoption of violent measures against Russia, proposed by Bernsdorf and seconded by Carteret, which if pursued, must have involved England in hostilities with the Czar; and he exultingly informed Walpole, that the king continued true to his resolution of signing no paper relating to British affairs, but in his presence.

The continuance of their authority was also greatly owing to the prosperous state of domestic affairs. The revival of the national credit, and the tranquillity established by the suppression of Atterbury's plot, which proved the sagacity and spirit of the ministers, and gave weight and dignity to England in all parts of Europe, made a deep impression on the mind of the king; and it reflects high honour both on the sovereign of

* See Correspondence.

whom it was said, and on the ministers by whom it was said, that the only method of preserving their power, beyond fear of competition or accident was, to form some salutary plan for the ease of the people and the benefit of trade, which points the king had much at heart.*

The character and conduct of Walpole, were no less instrumental in forwarding the triumph of his party. The beneficial consequences resulting from his commercial regulations had been too obvious to escape notice. His genius for financial operations, and the ease with which he obtained parliamentary supplies, had induced the king to say that Walpole could create gold out of nothing.† But he did not earn this confidence by mean concessions and base flattery; on the contrary, he ventured to contradict the wishes and prejudices of the king, whenever those wishes or prejudices seemed to militate against the true interests of England. An indubitable proof of this fact appears from the correspondence of this year. The king having requested £.200,000 for the purpose of opposing the efforts of the Czar to dethrone the king of Sweden, and place the duke of Holstein on the throne, Townshend strenuously exhorted Walpole to procure that sum. In reply, Walpole declared that the £.200,000 was reserved for the king's expenses, if he staid at Hanover later than Christmas. He must, therefore, either return to England sooner than he had proposed,

* See Correspondence, Period III.

† Etough, from Scrope, Correspondence, Period IV.

or the interference in the Swedish affairs must be relinquished. Walpole at the same time represented his objections to that interference in the strongest terms; explained his own conduct, and the great principle by which he appears to have been uniformly directed, which was, to be economical of the public money, but to spare no expense when the security of his country was at stake; to avoid foreign entanglements; not to be precipitate in contracting new engagements, and to feel the pulse of the nation before any measure of consequence was adopted, and to proceed with due caution. He concluded by observing, that the prosecution of a new war would effectually prevent the adoption of all schemes for the ease of the people, and the benefit of trade. The king, so far from being displeased with this freedom, was convinced by his arguments, adopted his views, and declared his resolution of implicitly following the advice of his British cabinet. He spoke of him in the highest terms of approbation, and when Townshend showed his answer to that letter, and asked whether he had not made too many compliments, observed, *that was impossible, for Walpole never had his equal in business.**

Notwithstanding, however, these evident proofs of Townshend's and Walpole's ascendency, reports were industriously circulated, that Carteret's power was superior; and these reports coming by rebound from Hanover, were exaggerated in England and France, and had a

* Correspondence, Period III.

considerable effect in suppressing the ardour of their adherents, and in giving spirit to the friends of their rival. It became necessary therefore to undeceive the public, and (as Townshend observed in a letter to Walpole) to obtain some *overt act* in their favour. It was accordingly determined to attack Carteret in his strong hold of Paris, where he supposed himself invincible.

As the union with France was at this juncture esteemed highly necessary to preserve the peace of Europe, and the internal tranquillity of England, those ministers who had most credit with the court of Versailles, were held in the highest estimation by George the First. Hence it became a matter of great concern for Townshend and Walpole to have their own confidential embassador at Paris, which was the center of the secret negociations for all foreign affairs, and by these means to prevent their opponent from preserving his weight in the cabinet, which he principally derived from the supposed credit of his creature, Sir Luke Schaub. It was their interest therefore to obtain his removal, and to substitute some person in whom they could place implicit confidence, and whose appointment should prove to the court of France, and convince both friends and adversaries in England, of their ascendency in the cabinet.

Horace Walpole was selected as the fittest person to bring forward on this occasion. He had from his earliest years been trained to business, under Stanhope, in Spain; under Carleton, when chancellor of the exchequer and secretary

of state; under Townshend, at the congress of Gertruydenberg, and during the negociation for the barrier treaty in 1710. At the accession of George the First, he was appointed secretary to lord Townshend, afterwards secretary to the treasury; and, as envoy to the States General, had conducted with great skill and ability the complicated negociations which took place at the Hague in 1715 and 1716. On the removal of Townshend and Walpole, he had continued invariably attached to them. At the coalition with Sunderland, in 1720, he had been nominated secretary to the duke of Grafton, then lord lieutenant of Ireland, and in 1721 secretary to the treasury. He was deputed, in 1722, as envoy to the Hague, which post he still filled with great credit and dignity, and was particularly noticed by George the First as a man of business and address.

As Townshend could not propose the mission of Horace Walpole to Paris, without an open quarrel with Carteret, to whose province, as the secretary for the southern department, that appointment belonged, he took advantage of the death of Cardinal du Bois, which happened at this time, to carry his scheme gradually into execution. He represented to the king, the necessity of sending a confidential person to Paris, to gain authentic information concerning the situation of affairs, and to ascertain whether Schaub was not at variance with count Nocé, who was supposed to govern the duke of Orleans. He named Horace Walpole as proper to be intrusted with so delicate an affair; and suggested,

that he might affect to take Paris in his way to Hanover, from a motive of mere curiosity.*

Having succeeded in this point, Townshend suggested that letters credential, under the pretence of sending a full power to accept the accession of the king of Portugal to the quadruple alliance, would facilitate the execution of the commission. The king approved this hint, and proposed it as his own thought to Carteret, who though confounded at this mortification, could not venture to make any objection.†

In these circumstances, Horace Walpole arrived at Paris on the 19th of October, and on the 1st of November, wrote so masterly a dispatch,‡ describing the situation of the court of France, the characters of the duke of Orleans, and of the principal ministers, as charmed the king, delighted his friends, and gave a sure omen of the victory which he was to obtain over Schaub, and consequently of that which his brother and Townshend would gain over Carteret. He particularly dwelt on Nocé's aversion to Schaub, on his refusal to listen to any overture of reconciliation, and on the influence which he possessed over the duke of Orleans; circumstances artfully displayed to prove the necessity of appointing an envoy, who might secure the good will of Nocé. Before the arrival of this dispatch at Hanover, Schaub had written, that the duke of Orleans was inclined to gratify the

* See Lord Townshend's Letters in September and October. Correspondence, 1723. † Ibid.

‡ Walpole Papers. Memoirs of Lord Walpole.

king, in conferring the dukedom on the family of la Vrilliere, and forwarded copies of letters which he had concerted with Morville, and which the king was to send to Louis the Fifteenth, and the duke of Orleans, pressing them in the strongest manner to comply with that request. Carteret, in a transport of joy, informed Schaub, Nov. 21, 1723, that the king had approved the letters, and had transcribed that to Louis the Fifteenth with his own hand. He warned him, however, not to deliver them, unless he was sure of success, and entreated him to forward the answer from the king of France as soon as possible. At the same time Townshend himself informed Walpole, that the affair of the dukedom was concluded, and that the marriage would soon take place. He added, that the duchess of Kendal already began to be jealous of the countess of Platen, and hinted, that through her influence, it might be practicable to establish Horace Walpole as embassador at the court of France. The accounts, however, transmitted by Horace Walpole, were of a very different complexion. He maintained unequivocally, that Schaub was totally mistaken, and had promised more than he could effect. His dispatches and private letters were filled with representations of Schaub's petulant and indiscreet behaviour, in pressing the grant; of the violent opposition made by the principal nobles; of their bitter and sarcastic reproaches against the interference of a British minister, or rather as they termed him, *no minister*, to obtain a

dukedom for a family, which was not entitled to such a distinction. He stated that Morville, tauntingly alluding to Schaub as a foreigner, said that he was happy to transact business with one who was a *true Englishman*. He detailed a secret and confidential conversation which he had with the duke of Orleans, who, after observing that he had requested to see him, for the purpose of conversing frankly on an affair of great importance; plainly indicated that he could give no credit to the representations of Schaub, whose zeal in this whole business, had originated from his attachment to Madame de la Vrilliere. The duke then mentioned the impropriety of granting a dukedom to that family; observed that the king was not fully apprized of the difficulties attending it; and requested Horace Walpole to write to lord Townshend, for authentic information concerning his majesty's real sentiments.

The day after this audience, the duke of Orleans died, and the duke of Bourbon was appointed prime minister. Schaub paid court to, and was well received by Madame de Prie, mistress of the duke of Bourbon, who favoured the grant from interested motives; and he wrote to Carteret the most exaggerated accounts of his influence over the new prime minister, and of his certain success in the affair of the dukedom. Carteret again believed these favourable accounts; and was again deceived.

Horace Walpole acted with great dignity and judgment. He paid no servile attention to

Madame de Prie, from a conviction that it was not necessary; behaved with deference to the duke of Bourbon; but privately courted the bishop of Frejus, afterwards cardinal Fleury, whose interest with the young king of France he saw and appreciated, and whose confidence he gained by his prudent conduct. Although the new prime minister, from a desire of gratifying Madame de Prie, who wished to establish a precedent in favour of her husband's claims to a dukedom, was more inclined to forward the grant than his predecessor; yet the loud clamours of the nobility, and the decided aversion of Louis the Fifteenth to the measure, convinced him of its impracticability. Schaub was either ignorant of this circumstance, or affected to be so. Anxious to carry a point, on the success of which Carteret's ascendancy in the cabinet, and his own continuance at Paris seemed ultimately to depend, and eager to gratify Madame de la Vrilliere, he pressed the duke of Bourbon, with his usual indiscretion, remonstrated against the delay as insulting to the king of England, and endeavoured to involve it in such a manner with public transactions, as to make it a state affair.

The duke of Bourbon, embarrassed with these solicitations, applied to Horace Walpole, in the same manner as his predecessor had done. He observed that the difficulties were insuperable; gave a true state of the affair as it related to his own situation, and the French king's sentiments upon it; declared that the king, as well as the

late duke of Orleans, had been deceived and imposed upon, and concluded with some expressions of resentment and contempt at Schaub's conduct and importunity.*

Horace Walpole received private instructions from lord Townshend and his brother, to proceed with great caution, and to act in such a manner as not to disgust the French cabinet, by pressing so disagreeable a request, and yet not to offend the king by appearing as if he opposed his wishes. He followed these instructions with consummate address; and the accounts of his proceedings, which were shown to the king, increased the good opinion already entertained of his talents for negociation, proved the influence he was rapidly acquiring in the cabinet of Versailles, and tended to diminish the credit of Carteret and Schaub. The king, on his return to England, convinced that he had been deceived by Schaub, and that the obstacles to the grant were insuperable, reluctantly withdrew his solicitation. Carteret had the unwelcome task of commanding Schaub not to press the affair any farther, and of inclosing a letter from the king to the duke of Bourbon,† declaring that it was never his intention to make the dukedom a state affair, and declining to insist on a request which was disagreeable to the king of France and the prime minister. Carteret, however, was still so convinced of his

* Horace Walpole to Lord Townshend, March 7, 1724. Walpole Papers.

† Walpole Papers, January 26, 1724.

superior favour, that he either disbelieved, or affected to disbelieve the reports of his declining influence. He filled his letters to Schaub with repeated declarations, that the king approved their conduct; exhorted him to be perfectly tranquil, and to bear all mortifications, until the affair of the dukedom should be finished; expressed his full conviction that they should maintain their ground, and that his own authority was stronger than ever; yet at the very time his own fall and the removal of Schaub were evident, from the appointment of Horace Walpole to be envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the court of Versailles. The additional honour thus conferred, increased the jealousy of Schaub, who found all the assurances of his patron belied, and himself in danger of being recalled from Paris. But even this mortification did not induce Carteret to acknowledge the superiority of his rivals; he still gave Schaub the strongest assurances of support from the king; advised him to attach himself to the duke of Bourbon and Madame de Prie; he declared, that the king was secretly inclined in his favour, but that he did not love disputes, and was unwilling to require such explanations as would force him to take a decided part. He observed, that the answer to the duke of Bourbon could by no means be interpreted, as if the king abandoned his request of the dukedom, although he did not desire that it might be considered as a public affair.

Carteret, perhaps, had sufficient reason to be

secure of his victory, as well because he was personally a favorite with the king, as because he was joined by a formidable combination of men who possessed great weight and influence. Amongst the members of the cabinet who acted with him, was William earl of Cadogan, who had concentred in himself the posts of commander in chief, and master of the ordnance, and who was supported by the friends and adherents of his deceased patron, John duke of Marlborough. Cadogan was frank, open, vehement, impatient of contradiction, and inclined, in case of difficulties, rather to cut the gordian knot with his sword, than attempt by patience to unravel its intricacy. He was in high favour with the king for his knowledge of foreign languages, his acquaintance with foreign manners, and for an ease and address which was partly derived from an early intercourse with the world, and partly from an intermixture of military and civil occupations. At this crisis, Cadogan had rendered himself so obnoxious to Walpole, that it was determined to open the political campaign with his dismission, which was to be a prelude to other changes. The post of commander in chief had been promised to lord Cobham, and the mastership of the ordnance to the duke of Argyle; but the king gave a decided negative to this proposal, by declaring that he would not part with Cadogan. As this attack was made at the opening of the session, when the predominant influence of Walpole in the house of commons, seemed to countenance

an opinion, that his demands must be complied with; this repulse was considered by the friends of Carteret and Cadogan, as the sure omen of his downfal.

In the midst of these divisions in the cabinet, the affairs in Ireland, relating to Wood's patent, gave Carteret an opportunity of impressing the king with unfavourable sentiments of Walpole, to whose misconduct he principally imputed these disturbances. He fomented the discontents in Ireland, and caballed with the Brodricks, who were incensed against the duke of Grafton, lord lieutenant, for ascribing the opposition solely to the secret manœuvres of lord chancellor Middleton, and for insisting, that either he should be deprived of the seals, or should not be appointed one of the lords justices.* Their discontent was no less vehement against Walpole, who supported the duke of Grafton; and Carteret increased their consequence, by enumerating to the king the services which the family of Middleton had performed in favour of his succession, by exaggerating their influence in Ireland, and by dwelling on the ill consequences likely to result from depriving lord Middleton of the seals. These commotions, although finally quelled by the prudence and ability of Walpole, yet gave great embarrassment to his administration, and delayed the removal of Carteret.

Walpole baffled his adversaries with the same arts which they endeavoured to employ against

* See Chapter 26th on the Disturbances in Ireland.

him. Bolingbroke had betrayed to him the intrigues of Carteret with the Tories, and had made offers from some of their leaders to join administration. Although Walpole rejected these overtures, and declined a general coalition with them, yet he detached several from the party, and amused others. He gained a great accession of strength by securing lord Harcourt, whom he introduced into the privy council, gratified with an increase of his pension, and for whom he obtained the appointment of one of the lords justices during the king's absence. By these means the leaders of the disaffected party were allured with hopes of similar honours and emoluments, if they would follow the same example, and being highly dissatisfied with Carteret, they made little opposition to the measures of government; flattering themselves that his removal would be soon followed by their introduction into power. To these expectations may be partly attributed the extreme tranquillity which distinguished the next session of parliament.

While this struggle for power was carrying on in the interior of the cabinet, public affairs were conducted with unexampled prosperity and quiet. The parliament met on the 9th of January, 1724. The speech from the throne concluded with dignified expressions of the connexion between the liberty and prosperity of the nation. "In the present happy situation of our affairs, I have nothing more to recommend to you, than that you would make use of

the opportunity, which your own good conduct has put into your hands, in considering of such farther laws as may be wanting for the ease and encouragement of trade and navigation, for the employment of the poor, and for exciting and encouraging a spirit of industry in the nation. I am fully satisfied, that the trade and wealth of my people, are the happy effects of the liberties they enjoy, and that the grandeur of the crown consists in their prosperity."

The address passed not only without a single dissenting voice, but even without a debate; and during the whole session the only motion that occasioned a division, was one for keeping up the same number of troops for 1724, as was maintained the year before, which was carried by a majority of 240 against 100. On the 24th of April, this session, so tranquil in effect, and so barren of incidents, was closed by a speech which commended in high terms of approbation, the unanimity, cheerfulness, and dispatch with which the business had been conducted, and expressed the highest satisfaction, that the same force was maintained by sea and land, which had enabled the nation to hold among the powers of Europe, the rank and figure due to her honour and dignity, without laying any new or additional burthen on the people.*

The unexampled unanimity and dispatch of business which distinguished this session, was almost solely owing to the good management

* Journals. Chandler.

of Walpole, and to his influence in the house of commons, which Saint John Brodrick, in a letter to lord Midleton, calls *prodigious*.* Hence his preponderance increased in the cabinet; and the king was induced to take a decided resolution in his favour. As a prelude to the removal of Carteret, Horace Walpole was named embassador to Paris. Yet such was the credit of Carteret, that this nomination was not finally effected without great difficulty. His address still supplied proofs of his influence, when it had almost totally declined; and Horace Walpole, in his private letters to his brother and Townshend, made no less heavy complaints of his situation at Paris, than Schaub of his disgusts, to Carteret.† The dispatches, though written to him and Schaub jointly, were by private intimations to the messenger, carried first to Schaub, and communicated by him to the French ministers, before Horace Walpole was informed of their contents; the dispatches for Spain, and for the plenipotentiaries, at the congress of Cambray, were enclosed to him, perused by him, and forwarded by him. Of this measure, Horace Walpole bitterly complained to his brother, declared his resolution not to act any longer jointly with Schaub, insisted that one of them must be recalled; and justly observed, that the removal or continuance of Schaub, must prove to the world, either the full establishment or decline of their credit

* Correspondence.

† Correspondence, January 5th, 1723.

with the king. Walpole and Townshend now found it necessary to exert all their influence, and to employ the utmost address.* They commissioned Horace Walpole to write an ostensible letter to lord Townshend, in which he should draw the character of Sir Luke Schaub, state the impropriety of his conduct, and the disadvantage which was derived to the king's affairs, by maintaining two ministers at Paris with divided authority, and insist on his own resignation, rather than continue in a situation in which he was perpetually thwarted and opposed.

This letter was shown to the king, and had a due effect. He directed that Schaub should be immediately recalled, and Townshend himself conveyed the orders to Carteret. But on the evening of the day in which the communication was made, Carteret prevailed on the king to suspend the orders for a precipitate recall of Schaub, and was permitted to send him word that the king deemed his presence in England necessary for his service, and that he might return to Paris for the solemnization of the marriage between the Count de St. Florentine, and the young countess of Platen.

In obtaining this point, Carteret had another object in view, besides softening the disgrace of

* This account of the intrigues of Carteret and Schaub at Paris, and the counter-intrigues of Horace Walpole and the brother ministers, is drawn from Sir Luke Schaub's Papers, in the possession of the earl of Hardwicke, and from the dispatches and letters to and from Horace Walpole, in the Orford and Townshend Papers. See Memoirs of Lord Walpole.

Schaub, and mortifying his rival. It was to send him back to Paris, with a commission, which might render his presence more necessary, and finally occasion the removal of Horace Walpole. This scheme was no less than to propose a treaty of marriage between the young king of France and the princess Anne, the eldest daughter of the prince of Wales. It was concerted between Carteret and the countess of Darlington at London, Sir Luke Schaub, Madame de la Vrilliere and Madame de Prie at Paris, and the countess of Platen at Hanover. Sir Luke Schaub had the indiscretion to make the proposal to the king, in his audience; but it was received with such marks of dissatisfaction, as gave Townshend and Walpole an opportunity to remonstrate against his presumption, and represent to the king the great disadvantage which would result to his affairs in France, if so indiscreet a person should be sent back as his minister. Schaub was therefore only permitted to return, for the purpose of assisting at the Count de St. Florentin's marriage. The king gave a portion of £.10,000 to the bride, but no dukedom was conferred on the family of la Vrilliere. Schaub was then recalled from Paris, and Horace Walpole received his credentials of embassador from the duke of Newcastle, appointed secretary of state in the place of Carteret, who was constituted lord lieutenant of Ireland. The duke of Grafton was made lord chamberlain; Henry Pelham, brother of the duke of Newcastle, and the

confidential friend of Walpole, was nominated secretary at war; and many of Walpole's friends were placed in the subordinate posts of government.

Thus terminated the contest between Carteret and the brother ministers; and though the victory was not as complete as they expected, because they could not obtain the removal of Cadogan, Roxburgh, and Middleton, yet it gave weight to their administration, and considerably diminished the strength of the opposing party in the cabinet. Carteret supported his defeat with great dignity and firmness of mind. He declared, that having no obligations to lord Townshend for his advancement to the post of secretary of state, he was resolved never to have submitted to him in that capacity. He did not affect to conceal his dissatisfaction at the ill usage he had experienced, and particularly complained that Horace Walpole had been sent to interlope in his province. While he avowed that he was defeated, he declared himself happier and easier in the situation of lord lieutenant, than in that of secretary of state, exposed to continual mortifications; and professed his resolution to continue on good terms with the ministers, and to promote the measures of government.* Yet his temper was so sanguine and his spirit so little depressed, that he persevered in asserting, that his favour with the king was greater than ever, that his enemies

* Stephen Poyntz to Horace Walpole, April 5th, 1724. Walpole Papers.

had gained no real strength by the late alterations,* and, in expectation of a favourable change, delayed, under various pretences, his departure for Ireland, until the month of October, when the necessary attendance on the duties of his vice-royalty, annihilated his hopes. Townshend and Walpole were now in such high favour, that they prevailed over the king's inclinations, and overcame his jealousy of the prince of Wales, which, notwithstanding the apparent reconciliation, continued still unabated, and showed itself in repeated refusals to confer any particular mark of favour on those who were personally attached to his son. With a view to gratify the prince, and to secure the earl of Scarborough, who was his master of the horse, and, next to Sir Spencer Compton, his greatest favourite, the brother ministers had promised him the garter; and as it was the custom of the king always to retain one vacant ribbon, they waited until two were undisposed of, when Townshend requested one of them for Scarborough. The king said, he could not comply with his request, because it was already conferred; and when Townshend asked, with some degree of surprise, who was the person? the king answered, "I intend it for your lordship." Townshend, after expressing a deep sense of his gratitude, begged leave to decline it. The king still insisted, and Townshend still declined. "Lord Scarborough," he replied, "is now at the door of the closet, expecting every moment

* Saint John Brodrick to lord Middleton.—Correspondence.

to be called in, to thank your majesty for the honour. He will naturally suppose that I have deceived him, and that after having left him with a promise to intercede in his favour, I have asked it for myself; which will ruin my character as a man of honour and veracity." "Well then," returned the king, "for once I will break through my usual rule, and will confer both the vacant garters; one shall be your's, and the other shall be given to lord Scarborough, whom you may now introduce."* Scarborough had accordingly the first, and both were installed at the same time.†

The king gave the strongest proof of the full confidence which he placed in Townshend and Walpole, by submitting to defer his journey to Hanover, even after he had fixed the time of his departure. This change of resolution was effected by the representations of lord Townshend, who stated in firm, though respectful terms, the inconveniences which would result from his absence at this period.‡

The continuance of the king in England had operated in suppressing public clamours, and in promoting public tranquillity. The parliament met on the 12th of November, and was opened by a speech from the throne, which dwelt with

* This anecdote was communicated by lord Sydney. It is mentioned in a different way by Count Broglio, in a letter to Louis the Fifteenth; but he relates it only as a rumour. Correspondence, 1724. † Political State.

‡ This letter, though without date, was evidently written at this period. See Correspondence, v. 2. p. 297.

particular energy and satisfaction on the prosperous state of affairs: "Peace with all powers abroad, at home perfect tranquillity, plenty, and an uninterrupted enjoyment of all civil and religious rights, are most distinguishing marks of the favour and protection of divine Providence, and these, with all their happy consequences, will, I doubt not, by the blessing of God upon our joint endeavours, be long continued to my people. The same provision by sea and land, for the defence and safety of the nation, will continue to make us respected abroad, and consequently secure at home. The same attention to the ease and encouragement of trade and navigation, will establish credit upon the strongest basis, and raise such a spirit of industry, as will not only enable us gradually to discharge the national debt, but will likewise greatly increase the wealth, power, and influence of this kingdom.——You must all be sensible how much our present happiness is owing to your union and steady conduct; it is therefore wholly unnecessary to recommend to you unanimity and dispatch in all your deliberations. The zeal and abilities you have on all occasions shown, in supporting the interest of your country, even under the greatest difficulties, leave no room to doubt of my having your entire and effectual concurrence in every thing that can tend to the service of the public, and to the good of my people."*

This session of parliament, no less remarkable

* Chandler.

for the unanimity with which business was conducted, than for a barrenness of important transactions, was only distinguished by the commencement of Pulteney's opposition, the recall of Bolingbroke, events which are noticed in subsequent chapters of this work, and by the impeachment of lord Macclesfield, in which Walpole took very little share. It was closed on the 31st of May.

A few days before the prorogation of parliament, the order of the Bath was revived, and the minister was created a knight, from which period he assumed the title of Sir Robert Walpole, and in 1726, he was installed knight of the garter; the value of which distinction is greatly enhanced by the consideration, that excepting admiral Montagu, afterwards earl of Sandwich, he was the only commoner who, since the reign of James the First, had been dignified by that order.

On this event he had the honour of being congratulated by the author of the Night Thoughts in a poem, called the Instalment. The poet commences in an exalted strain of panegyric, by invoking the shades of the deceased knights to descend from heaven to assist at the inauguration of their new compeer: and concludes with an animated imitation of a celebrated apostrophe in the Rape of the Lock:

> Ye mighty dead, ye garter'd sons of praise!
> Our morning stars! Our boast in former days!
> Which hov'ring o'er, your purple wings display,
> Lur'd by the pomp of this distinguish'd day,

Stoop and attend: by one the knee be bound;
One, throw the mantle's crimson folds around;
By that, the sword on his proud thigh be plac'd,
This, clasp the diamond girdle round his waist;
His breast, with rays, let just Godolphin spread;
Wise Burleigh plant the plumage on his head;
And Edward own, since first he fix'd the race,
None prest fair glory with a swifter pace.

CHAPTER 25

1725—1726.

Anecdotes of Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke—Disagreement between him and Oxford—His Schemes in favour of the Pretender—Disgraced on the Accession of George the First—Flies—Joins the Pretender—Appointed his Secretary of State—Removed—Causes of his Dismission—Makes Overtures to the British Cabinet—Receives a Promise of being restored—Writes his Letter to Sir William Wyndham, under that Supposition—Censures Ministers—Makes Overtures to them—Cabals against them—Renews his Offers of Attachment to them—Conduct of Walpole in his Favour—Bolingbroke receives his Pardon in Blood—His Overtures to the Walpoles—Act of Parliament in his Favour—Supported by Walpole—Motives for Walpole's Conduct—Bolingbroke joins Opposition—Remarks on his Conduct and Writings.

WHEN Atterbury arrived at Calais, he found Bolingbroke, who had just obtained his pardon, waiting for a conveyance to England, on which he expressed his surprise, and exclaimed, "Then I am exchanged!" And well might the bishop be astonished, that a minister who had privately caballed to place the Pretender on the throne, and had, since his flight, openly engaged in his service, should experience the lenity of government, and be permitted to return to his native country, which he had endeavoured to distress by secret intrigues and open rebellion.

The pardon of Bolingbroke, granted by the

king, was soon followed by the repeal of the bill of attainder passed against him in 1716; and Walpole, who had moved for that bill, moved also for its repeal; an act of imprudence which he committed in opposition to the advice of his most approved friends, the opinion of several of the king's ministers, and in contradiction to his own judgment. I shall in this chapter attempt to develope the causes which led to this extraordinary event, and explain the reasons that induced Walpole to take a step, of which he too late repented. This inquiry will be introduced by a few biographical anecdotes, for the purpose of connecting the narrative.

Henry St. John, son of Sir Henry St. John, baronet, of Lydiard Tregoze, in Wiltshire, by Mary, second daughter and heiress of Robert Rich, earl of Warwick, was born in 1678.* He received his education at Eton school, and completed it at Christ Church, Oxford. He distinguished himself at a very early period by his talents and excesses; and made so conspicuous a figure in the house of commons, that in 1704, he was appointed secretary at war, at the recommendation of Harley, with whom he acted under the banner of the Tories. On the removal of Harley, in 1707, St. John resigned his employments, and followed the fortune of his bene-

* The age of lord Bolingbroke is erroneously stated by his biographer, and by Collins, both of whom say he died in 1751, in his 79th year, which places his birth in 1673. It appears from one of his letters to Sir William Wyndham, dated *New-year's day*, 1738, in which he says "nine months hence I shall be three-score." (Egremont Papers.)

factor. On the dismission of the Whig administration, Harley proposed to reinstate him in his employment, and expressed a desire to admit some of the most moderate Whigs into the ministry. But St. John opposed the coalition, and insisted on being appointed secretary of state for foreign affairs, with which demand Harley was obliged to comply.

Bolingbroke was suspected, during his embassy at Paris, of having betrayed the secrets of the cabinet to the French court. These suspicions of his treachery were probably derived from his inattention and love of pleasure; for Madame Tencin, so remarkable for beauty, abilities, gallantry, and skill in political intrigue, drew him into a connexion with her, at the instigation of Torcy, and contrived to steal from him several papers and dispatches.*

Two such opposite characters as Oxford and Bolingbroke, could not long cordially agree. Bolingbroke possessed great animation of countenance, elegance of manners, and dignity of deportment. He was fascinating in conversation, of commanding eloquence, abounding in wit and fancy, master of polite learning, which he knew how to draw forth on all occasions. In his private character he was without morals and without principles, not only not concealing, but rather proud of his profligacy. He was fond of pleasure, yet never suffered his amusements to interfere with affairs of importance;

* Horace Walpole to Lord Townshend, Nov. 1, 1723. Walpole Papers.

affecting to resemble the characters of Alcibiades and Petronius, by mixing pleasure and business, in which, when necessity required his attendance, he drudged like a common clerk. Quick in apprehension, easy of access, no less artful in negociation, than decisive and vigorous in action, clear and perspicuous in his style, but too fond of declamation and metaphor; adopting and enforcing all the violent measures of the Tories; scorning to temporise, caballing with the friends of the Pretender, either with a view to place him on the throne, or to obtain the removal of Oxford by their assistance.

Oxford was unimpeached in his private character, never offending against morality, either in conversation or action, a tender husband, and a good father; equally disinterested and generous. He prided himself on his high descent, was stiff and formal in his deportment, and forbidding in his manner. He was learned and pedantic; embarrassed and inelegant, both in speaking and writing. He was equally an enemy to pleasure and business; extremely dilatory and fond of procrastination; timid in public affairs, yet intrepid when his own person only was concerned; jealous of power, indefatigable in promoting the petty intrigues of the court, but negligent in things of importance; a Whig in his heart, and a Tory from ambition. Too ready, for temporary convenience, to adopt measures he disapproved, yet unwilling wholly to sacrifice his real sentiments to interest or party; affecting the most profound secrecy in all political transactions,

and mysterious in the most trifling occurrences. He was liberal in making promises, yet breaking them without scruple, a defect which arose more from facility of temper, than from design. He corresponded at the same time with the dethroned family and the house of Hanover, and was therefore neither trusted nor respected by either party. The only point in which these two ministers agreed was, the love of literature and the patronage of learned men; which rendered their administration eminently illustrious.

The disagreement naturally occasioned by such discordance of tempers and principles, was heightened by a perpetual struggle for power, and the views of disappointed ambition. Bolingbroke was disgusted that Harley was advanced to an earldom, while he was only created a viscount; a cause of complaint which he acknowledged, by saying that he was dragged into the house of lords, in such a manner as to make his promotion a punishment, and not a reward. He was still farther discontented, when he did not obtain the order of the garter, although six vacant ribbons were conferred, among whom his rival, Oxford, was not forgotten. But although he was disaffected; yet he did not venture to give a public opposition to the first minister. Oxford maintained the superiority of power, by the ascendancy of long habit, by the influence of the favourite, lady Masham, and by the strong prejudice which queen Anne entertained against Bolingbroke, for his notorious profligacy.

But when Oxford neglected the Jacobites, by whose assistance he had made a peace, and offended lady Masham, by depriving her of a share in the profits of the Asiento contract, Bolingbroke took advantage of these indiscretions: he intrigued with Berwick and the Jacobite agents, caballed with lady Masham, who favoured the restoration of the Pretender, affected to court the Whigs, obtained the dismission of Oxford, and would have succeeded him in the place of lord high treasurer, had not the death of queen Anne disappointed his hopes.

Being, by the command of George the First, deprived of the seals with marks of disgrace, he sent a vindication of his conduct to the king, and in a visit which he paid to Bothmar, attributed his dismission to the insinuations of Oxford, and accused his rival of having misrepresented his conduct.* When the arrangement of the new administration precluded him from all hopes, and the Tories were persecuted, he acted with spirit and dignity, and warmly defended in the house of lords, the peace of Utrecht, when it was attacked by the Whigs. He would not, however, venture to await the prosecution with which he was threatened; but after having received, as he himself asserts, certain and repeated information, "that a resolution was taken to bring him to the scaffold," he fled from England.†

* Macpherson's State Papers, vol. 2. p. 650.

† Tindal, vol. 18. p. 356.

Notwithstanding the laboured apologies and eloquent vindication of his conduct, in his letter to Sir William Wyndham; and his positive assurances that he never formed any engagement with the Pretender, until he had been attainted;* it is now ascertained beyond the smallest doubt, that Bolingbroke had entered deeply into the schemes which Oxford, in connivance with the queen, had formed to break the Protestant succession, and to place the Pretender on the throne of Great Britain; that Oxford had caballed with the Jacobites, principally with a view to overturn the Whig ministry, and to facilitate the peace; and that the real cause of his removal was derived from a refusal to continue the designs in favour of the Pretender, which Bolingbroke offered to pursue. The whole plan and progress of this conspiracy is detailed in so clear and unequivocal a manner by Marshal Berwick, who was principally concerned in the correspondence, as to demonstrate the guilt of Bolingbroke, and sufficiently prove that he was justly attainted for treasonous practices, by the sovereign whom he had attempted to exclude from the throne.†

Having quitted England, to avoid the punishment which awaited him, he threw himself into the Pretender's service, and was appointed his secretary of state. The Pretender, on his return from his ill-conducted expedition into Scotland, suspecting the treachery or indiscretion of Bo-

* Final Answer to the Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication.
† Memoires de Berwic.

lingbroke, dismissed him from his service with ignominy. Many reports were spread at Paris of the motives which induced the Pretender to remove a person of such distinguished talents, to which the earl of Stair ludicrously alludes in a private letter to Horace Walpole.* But though charges of treachery† were laid against Bolingbroke, by the Pretender's party at Paris, yet as Stair gave no credit to them, and as Marshal Berwick‡ also entirely exculpated him from any imputation of treachery, we have no reason to suppose that he acted contrary to his professions, or was mean enough to betray a prince whom he was at that time interested to restore. His dismission was sudden and unexpected. He had supped with the Pretender, who declared that he had many enemies, but assured him of his unalterable kindness. Bolingbroke retired at one in the morning; and at nine the duke of Ormond came to demand the seals. The real cause of his dismission was derived from some abusive expressions, which, in a state of intoxication, he had uttered against the Pretender. Ormond, who was present, related them in confidence to lord Mar, who, desirous of ruining Bolingbroke, that he might succeed him in his

* Correspondence, Article Bolingbroke, Period III.

† These charges were made in a letter from James Murray, afterwards created earl of Dunbar, by the Pretender, and were answered partly by himself and partly by his secretary, Brinsden,* and his justification refuted in a reply supposed to be written by Mar.

‡ Memoires de Berwic.

* Tindal, vol. 18. p. 516—544.

office of secretary of state, asked the duke, in the presence of the Pretender, what the expressions were which Bolingbroke had made use of. Ormond declined repeating them, until the Pretender commanded him; he then obeyed, and the prince was so exasperated, that he instantly sent Ormond to announce his disgrace. This step was taken without the knowledge of the queen mother. Hearing of his dismission, she sent to Bolingbroke, requesting him not to retire; as matters might be still adjusted between her son and him. He returned for answer that he was a free man; that he wished his arm might rot off, if he ever drew his sword, or employed his pen in their service.*

Bolingbroke, in fact, rejoiced at his dismission, for it afforded an immediate pretence to quit the party. "The chevalier," he says, "cut this gordian knot asunder at one blow. He broke the links of that chain which former engagements had fastened on me, and gave me a right to esteem myself free from obligations of keeping measures with him. I took, therefore, from that moment, the resolution of making my peace at home, and of employing all the unfortunate experience I had acquired already, to undeceive my friends, and to promote the union and quiet of my country."†

He opened accordingly a negotiation with the earl of Stair, who, he says, had been com-

* Earl of Waldegrave's Diary, who received the account from general Buckley, who was at the time in the Pretender's household.

† Letter to Sir William Wyndham.

missioned from England to treat with him; but while he refused to reveal secrets which had been intrusted to him, or betray his friends, he offered his services for the support of the established government. He said that he never did any thing by halves, and in returning to his duty, he proposed to serve his king and country with zeal and affection. With that view he thought himself bound by duty and gratitude, honour, and even self-interest, to inform the king of every thing which his experience could suggest, that might be useful to strengthen the public tranquillity, and to crush the projects of the king's enemies. He offered his services to recall to their duty the Tories, who had embraced the Pretender's party, by developing his true character, and by showing how greatly they deceived themselves in trusting to him for security for their religion and liberties. "As to myself," adds lord Stair, "I am convinced that he spoke to me in the sincerity of his heart. I firmly believe that he is resolved to do all that lies in his power to suppress, and eradicate the Pretender's party; and I am fully satisfied, that there is no person who can do more hurt to the cause than he can. At the end of our conversation, he pressed my hand; and said, 'My lord, if the ministers do me justice to believe that my professions are sincere, the more they manage my reputation, the greater will be the advantage to the king's affairs. If, on the contrary, they suspect my conduct, they will act right in enacting conditions, which I shall also act right in rejecting.

The difficulties which I make in promising too much, will guaranty the performance of my engagements. In all cases, time and my conduct will prove the uprightness of my intentions; and it is far better to wait with patience, than to obtain my wishes earlier, by quitting the path of honour and probity.' " *

These offers seem to have been accepted; promises were made to him of restoration to his country; a barony was, on the 2nd of July 1716, conferred on his father, Sir Henry St. John, with a reversion to his other sons, and it was in consequence of these favours, and the expectation of a future reward, and probably by the advice of lord Stair, that Bolingbroke wrote a confidential letter to Sir William Wyndham,† which was purposely thrown into the hands of the ministry, and of which an account is given by lord Townshend to secretary Stanhope, who was then at Hanover. This friendly communication, in which he exhorts his friend to quit the cause of the Pretender, was followed by the celebrated letter, that was afterwards published.

Although Bolingbroke, from the hopes of being restored to his country, thus traversed the views of the Pretender; yet the ministers, who had reaped great advantage from his recantation, did not fulfil their promises, and he continued in anxious suspense, constantly expecting the

* Lord Stair's Letter to secretary Craggs, at the end of lord Bolingbroke's Letter to Sir William Wyndham.

† Correspondence, Period III.—Article, Bolingbroke.

performance of an engagement which was as constantly deferred.

Sunderland and Stanhope, in particular, seem to have given him expectations, which they either were unable, or never intended to realise; and a report of his restoration, in 1719, gave to Walpole, who was then in opposition, an opportunity of mentioning it with public disapprobation. In his pamphlet on the Peerage bill, speaking of Oxford, he says, "His rival in guilt and power, even now presumes to expect an act of the legislature to indemnify him, and qualify his villany; and I doubt not but both* expect once more to give laws to the kingdom."† Yet it was under the administration, and by the efforts of this very minister, who had moved his impeachment in the house of commons, that Bolingbroke was restored to his country. In May 1723, his pardon passed the great seal, or as it was called, his restoration in blood, which enabled him to return to his country, but without giving back his forfeited estate, or his seat in the house of peers.‡

Bolingbroke, on receiving his pardon, came to England, wrote letters of thanks to the king, Townshend, and the duchess of Kendal, at Hanover; waited on Walpole, to whom he behaved in the most servile manner, and betrayed the intrigues of Carteret with the Tories. He even proposed to Walpole, a coalition with Sir William Wyndham, earl Gower, and other leaders of that

* Oxford and Bolingbroke. † P. 14.
‡ Political State for 1723.

party, whom he described as dissatisfied with Carteret for having amused them with false hopes, disgusted with a fruitless opposition, and anxious to join administration. Walpole reprimanded his officiousness with becoming dignity, and did not hesitate to insinuate, that he was working against his own interest, in attempting to form a coalition between the Whigs and Tories, when his restoration depended solely on a Whig parliament. At the same time he frankly declared that great difficulties opposed it; gave no hopes that he would rashly bring before the house of commons any motion in his favour, and hinted, that future rewards could only be purchased by future services. Bolingbroke received these observations with the utmost deference, acknowledged his obligations to Townshend and Walpole, and made the strongest professions of future attachment. He maintained a correspondence with the duchess of Kendal, and trusted to her influence for removing all obstructions.

He availed himself of this journey, to renew his intimacy with his former acquaintances, particularly Sir William Wyndham, and to form new connexions. His insinuating manners and lively conversation captivated many who had detested him while in power and prosperity. Among these lord Finch and the earl of Berkley received his overtures with complacency, and zealously espoused his cause.*

After passing a few weeks at Aix-la-Chapelle,

* Etough.

with a view to obtain permission to visit Hanover; he returned to Paris, at the moment when Horace Walpole and Schaub were striving for pre-eminence in the cabinet of Versailles. Being fully convinced that Carteret would be defeated, and that the influence of Townshend and Walpole was predominant, he paid the most servile court to Horace Walpole, and gave him repeated information on subjects of great secrecy and importance.

On the death of the duke of Orleans, a prospect opened to him of rendering his situation at Paris extremely interesting, by becoming a confidential channel of communication between the duke of Bourbon and the British administration, and his own efforts were not wanting to carry his scheme into execution. He communicated to Walpole and Harcourt the situation of affairs at the court of France, drew the character, and described the power of the duke of Bourbon, and the influence of Madame de Prie. He stated his own intimacy with the prime minister and the mistress, and offered his services to carry on a secret correspondence, and to promote the good understanding between the two kingdoms, which had been established under the administration of the late duke of Orleans, and which, unless the duke of Bourbon could be kept steady to the same principles, was in danger of being overturned.*

Bolingbroke managed the business with such dexterity, that he affected to decline, while he

* Correspondence.—Article, Bolingbroke.

was most anxious to be employed in this mediation; and appeared to be acting in conformity to the suggestions of the British cabinet, while he was carrying into execution his own arrangements. Walpole was so far imposed on by his artful representations, that he wrote to his brother Horace,* recommending him to employ Bolingbroke as agent with the duke of Bourbon; and had not the address and sagacity of the minister at Paris declined his interposition, and opened a direct communication with the duke of Bourbon, without the privity of Bolingbroke, the principal management of the king's affairs must have been thrown into his hands, and the ministers in England must have been laid under such obligations, that his complete restoration would have been an act of justice and necessity. Foiled in this attempt, he endeavoured to insinuate himself into the negotiation, relating to the grant of a dukedom to the Marquis de la Vrilliere. He related to Horace Walpole the embarrassments under which the duke of Bourbon laboured, exaggerated the indiscretion of Schaub, and hinted that by proper management, that intrigue might be so conducted as to lay a foundation of merit with the French minister, and destroy the credit of Carteret. In a conference which he had with the duke of Bourbon, the account of which he took care should be communicated to Horace Walpole,* he decried Carteret, praised Townshend, and exalted the

* Letter from Horace Walpole to Robert Walpole, Paris, December 15, 1723. Walpole Papers.

abilities and influence of Walpole. This double dealing did not escape the notice of Schaub; and in reply to his account, transmitted in his private correspondence, Carteret was induced to observe, "What you say of Bolingbroke is scarcely credible. If it is true, he has not half the capacity I thought he had."*.

In the midst of these intrigues, Bolingbroke opened his situation, and explained his sentiments to Horace Walpole. He described his suspence and agitation, recapitulated the promises given by Sunderland and Stanhope, mentioned his repeated disappointments, and observed, "that autumnal promises had ended in vernal excuses." He expressed his thanks for the act of favour lately extended to him, and added that he had no reason to complain of the present ministers, as they had performed as much as they had undertaken. He trusted that the inclinations of the king, as well as those of Townshend and Walpole, were not unfavourable; and hoped that his restoration might be obtained in parliament. He endeavoured to separate his case from all considerations of party. He artfully declared himself at full liberty, as having no tie nor obligation to any person, but to those who would come forward in his favour; he disclaimed all connexions with the Tories, whom he accused of having treated him with ingratitude and barbarity; and declared his firm opinion, that the administration could not stand, nor the government be supported, excepting on

* Carteret to Schaub, March 12, 1724. Hardwicke Papers.

a Whig foundation, and no engraftment could be made but upon a Whig stock. He protested that he would prove himself a faithful subject to the king, be for ever grateful to those who had served him in so important an affair, and would act as they should prescribe to him, either by exerting himself in the house of lords, or by retiring into the country.

The reply of Horace Walpole was open, manly, and explicit. He expressed great satisfaction at the declaration, that his brother and friends had never deceived Bolingbroke, and said that what remained to be done, depended on parliament. He exposed the difficulties arising from the temper and disposition of parties, hinted at the general aversion of the Whigs to his restoration, described the embarrassment of the ministers, and the obstacles which might arise to defeat it, if precipitately introduced into the house of commons; and he hinted, in general terms, that his brother's proneness to mercy, his regard for Bolingbroke, and his inclination to oblige lord Harcourt, would incline him to adopt any practicable means of serving him.

Bolingbroke observing, from this discourse, that insuperable difficulties obstructed his complete restoration, prudently appeared to give up that design, and requested that Horace Walpole would intercede with his brother, at least to obtain the reversal of his attainder, so far as to render him capable of enjoying the family estate, after the death of his father. He added, that he had not mentioned this request even to

his friend lord Harcourt, but entirely submitted it to the good will and judgment of the minister at the head of the treasury.*

His views at this period were facilitated by his marriage with Madame de Villette, the niece of Madame de Maintenon, a woman of great merit and accomplishments, who was highly esteemed at the French court; and a private transaction, which related to part of her property, gave him an opportunity of sending her to England, and of soliciting his restoration. Madame de Villette employed Drummond, an English banker, to place £.50,000 in the funds, who purchased, in the name of Sir Matthew Decker, long annuities, bearing interest at 4 per cent. Decker gave a note to Drummond, with an order to pay the sum on demand of Madame de Villette. Eighteen months afterwards, Decker paid £.1,000 on her draft, and remitted her the annual interest of the remainder till Christmas 1723. About that period, he refused to transfer any more money on her order, alleging, that as she was married, he could not deliver it up without being indemnified; and the situation of lord Bolingbroke, whose estate and property had been declared forfeited, rendered his indemnification of no avail. Thus circumstanced, the lady repaired to England, bearing the name of Villette, and required the payment of her money in her own right. She brought strong recommendations

* Horace Walpole's Letter to Robert Walpole.—Orford and Walpole Papers.

from the duke of Bourbon and count de Morville, and under cover of this transaction, paid assiduous court to the ministers, by whom she was well received, and from whom she obtained a promise to reverse that part of the bill of attainder, which related to the forfeiture of his estate. Bolingbroke expressed himself highly satisfied with this promise, although it fell short of the offers which had been made by the preceding administration, and renewed, in the strongest terms, his professions of devotion to Walpole, for this essential mark of favour.

The minister, however, had many difficulties to encounter, and many obstructions to remove, before he could venture to submit the question to the house of commons. Although Sir William Wyndham had conciliated, in favour of Bolingbroke, a great number of Tories; yet a considerable body of them, highly dissatisfied with his late application to the Whigs, still remained inflexible. But the principal opposition was expected from the staunch Whigs, those who had been the strenuous advocates for the succession in the Hanover family, and who were the firm supporters of government. To obtain their assent, or to baffle their attempts, required much skill and management, and was the work of time and labour.

The period at length arrived when this promise was fulfilled. On the 20th of April 1725, lord Finch offered to the house of commons, a petition from Henry St. John, late viscount Bolingbroke, setting forth, "That he was truly

concerned for his offence in not having surrendered himself, whereby he was attainted of high treason, and forfeited all his real and personal estate, and praying, that leave may be given to bring in a bill for restoring him to his family inheritance, and enabling him to make purchases of any real or personal estate within the kingdom."

Walpole brought the consent of the king; and after the reading of the petition, seconded the motion, made by lord Finch, for bringing in the bill, by observing, "That he was fully satisfied the petitioner had sufficiently atoned for his past offences, and therefore deserved the favour of that house so far, as to enable him to enjoy his family inheritance, which could not be done without an act of parliament."

Methuen, comptroller of the household, in an animated speech, expressed his hearty disapprobation of the motion, and observed, "that the public crimes for which this petitioner stood attainted, were so heinous, so flagrant, and of so deep a dye, as not to admit of any expiation or atonement; and whatever he might have done to deserve his majesty's private grace and pardon, yet he thought him altogether unworthy of any national favour." Then, after enumerating the instances of his villainous and scandalous conduct, while he had a share in the administration of affairs in the last reign; he concluded, "to sum up all his crimes in one, his traitorous design of defeating the Protestant succession, the foundation of both our present

and future happiness; and of advancing a popish Pretender to the throne, which would have involved his native country in endless misery." The arguments which serjeant Miller advanced were no less strong. "He was against the motion for three reasons: 1. Because he thought it against the interest of the king; 2. Against the interest of his country; 3. Against the interest of the present ministry. He loved the king better than he loved himself; and hated his enemies more than he did. He loved his country as he loved himself; and as he thought its interest inseparable from the king's, so he would not have any public favour shown to one, who had acted in so notorious a manner against both. As for the present ministers, he was satisfied with their just, prudent, and successful management, and was unwilling to see them exposed to the cabals and intrigues of their inveterate, though seemingly reconciled enemies."* This opposition was strenuously enforced by Arthur Onslow, afterwards speaker of the house of commons, lord William Paulett, Sir Thomas Pengelly, and several others, who almost uniformly supported the measures of government. The motion, however, was carried by 231 voices against 113; and lord Finch and Walpole were ordered to bring in a bill according to the prayer of the petitioner.†

On the second reading of the bill, May 13, lord William Paulett moved for the addition of a clause, "disabling the late viscount Boling-

* Chandler. † Journals.

broke from being a member of either house of parliament, or from enjoying any office or place of trust." This motion, warmly seconded by several members, was no less strenuously opposed by the minister, and negatived by 154 against 84. The bill being sent up to the upper house, passed without a division, but not without a violent protest signed by five lords;* and finally received the royal assent.

Thus was concluded this difficult and disagreeable business, from which the minister acquired more unpopularity, than from any other act in his administration, for which he incurred great censure both from friends and enemies, and by which, instead of conciliating the favour, he exasperated the very person for whom he exposed himself to so much obloquy.

On the 24th of July, Bolingbroke returned to England, wholly dissatisfied with the reversal of the forfeiture, which he had so repeatedly and earnestly solicited, as the termination of his hopes, and for which he proffered his most devoted attachment to those who should favour his cause. "Here I am," he observed in a letter to Swift, "two-thirds restored, my person safe, (unless I meet hereafter with harder treatment than even that of Sir Walter Raleigh) and my estate, with all the other property I have acquired, or may acquire, secured to me. But the attainder is kept carefully and prudently in force, lest so corrupt a member

* Coventry, Bristol, Clinton, Lechmere, Onslow.—Journals.—Chandler.

should come again into the house of lords, and his bad leaven should sour that sweet untainted mass."*

About the same time, he wrote a letter to the king, claiming the fulfilment of the promise that had been made of a full restitution, laying the blame of the failure on the minister, whom he accused of meanness and treachery,† under the mask of good will. He disclaimed all obligation to Walpole, and always asserted, both in his public writings and private letters, that the king invited him, and drew him into England by frequent, solemn, and unsolicited promises of a complete restoration.‡

He now declared himself a decided enemy to Walpole, effected a reconciliation with the Tories, whom he had so recently reviled, joined Pulteney and the discontented Whigs; and a year had scarcely elapsed since the passing of the bill, before he began to publish in the Craftsman, a political paper, which first appeared on the 5th of December 1726, a series of essays replete with the most bitter invectives.

The adherents of Walpole, in their turn, no less bitterly accused Bolingbroke of ingratitude; that after being restored to the liberty of breathing the air of his native country, and the enjoyment of his fortune (when he was deservedly an exile from one, and had justly forfeited the

* Swift's Works, vol. 19. p. 164.

† Lord Bolingbroke to lord Hardwicke, Correspondence, Period III. Article, Bolingbroke.

‡ Lord Bolingbroke to Sir William Wyndham. Ibid.

other) by the indulgence, favour, and assistance of the minister, he used that indulgence, and requited that favour, by labouring for the destruction of his benefactor.

In all questions where party is concerned, and resentment excited, and where abuse is thrown out with unabating virulence on both sides, it is difficult to reconcile discordant assertions, and to extract truth from opposite accusations. It is no less difficult to render the conduct of Walpole consistent with that prudence by which he was commonly directed, or to justify the motives which induced him to promote an act that enabled Bolingbroke to settle in England, and to harass his administration. He had known Bolingbroke from his early youth; he appreciated his talents, was aware of his insinuating manners and restless temper, was not ignorant that while he was paying the most servile court to the Whigs, he had been caballing with the Tories; was convinced that no dependence could be placed on his word, and must have been conscious that nothing less than a full restoration would satisfy a man of his aspiring ambition.

But the apparent inconsistency and imprudence of Walpole's conduct, are sufficiently accounted for from the secret history of this whole transaction; from which it appears, that he did not act from his own impulse, but was gradually led to promote a measure, which he did not approve. We have his own authority, that the

restoration of lord Bolingbroke was the work of the duchess of Kendal, and that in obedience to the express commands of the king, he supported the act. Bolingbroke, continually disappointed in his hopes, had recourse to a surer and more powerful channel of favour. He gained the duchess of Kendal by a present of £.11,000,* and obtained from her a promise to use her influence over the king for the purpose of forwarding his complete restoration. Harcourt, with her co-operation, seems principally to have managed this delicate business; and prevailed on Walpole to obtain the reluctant consent of lord Townshend.†

In this juncture, Townshend removed to Hanover, and left to Walpole the management of the business. Walpole having sounded his friends, and the advocates of government, found that strong objections were made to the restoration of so obnoxious a person, and being himself inclined to the same opinion, he, with his usual frankness and candour, represented the difficulties, not only to Townshend, but even to Bolingbroke himself, and declined entering into any farther engagement. Bolingbroke, who well understood the temper of parties, soon perceived that insuperable obstacles were opposed to his complete restoration. He thought fit,

* Etough's Minutes of a Conversation with Sir Robert Walpole. Correspondence.

† This fact appears in a letter from lord Harcourt to lord Sunderland, dated March 25, 1721.

therefore, to temporize, and requested, as I have already observed, the reversal of part of the bill of attainder, without obtaining his seat in the house of lords. This request, strongly enforced by the duchess of Kendal, was particularly recommended by the king to Walpole, in a most authoritative manner. The minister could not venture to disobey the express commands of the king; could not withstand the importunities of the duchess, who had recently assisted in driving Carteret and Cadogan from the helm; was anxious to oblige lord Harcourt, with whom he then lived in habits of the strictest intimacy, and was overcome by the unceasing solicitations of Bolingbroke, or softened by his professions of inviolable devotion.

Walpole himself performed all he had promised; and had reason in his turn to expect the accomplishment of those professions of gratitude which Bolingbroke had recently made to him. He was not responsible for any agreement made by the preceding administration; he was not answerable for the private assurances of the duchess of Kendal; he was not even bound by the promises, if any such were positively made, of the sovereign himself. Bolingbroke had therefore no reason to accuse Walpole of meanness and treachery, of having broken his word, and of having deceived him under the mask of good-will; for the minister never in any instance promised a full restitution, but always in the most frank and candid manner, gave no farther hopes than obtaining the repeal of that

part of the bill of attainder which related to the forfeiture of his estates.*

But whatever were the motives which induced Walpole to consent to the return of Bolingbroke, it was undoubtedly the greatest act of imprudence which he ever committed. For till that event, he had only to contend with an heterogeneous opposition, unallied in principle, and divested of mutual confidence; easily vanquished, because not capable of uniting under any leader acceptable to all, in a well-concerted attack. It remained for Bolingbroke to infuse spirit and harmony into this inert and ill-combined mass. He soon found means to effect this end, by a plausible philosophy, recommended by all the graces of eloquence, and enforced by all the arts of personal address. He directed and inspired their labours in parliament; and his ready pen was employed at once to justify their conduct, and to vilify their adversaries.

His writings were recommended by a glare of metaphorical ornament, at that time very unusual, the effect of which was to dazzle the judgment of the reader, fix his attention upon the surface, and prevent him from penetrating into the substance of the argument.

It is a just remark of his biographer, that Bolingbroke too frequently falls into the same error of which he accuses Clarendon, that of

* See further accounts of this transaction in Mem. of Lord Walpole, ch. 6, by which it appears that Sir Robert Walpole always opposed Bolingbroke's full restoration.

giving characters of persons which are incompatible with their actions. He warped history to his own convenience, and was less solicitous to represent past events truly, than to draw parallels with those against whom he directed his efforts, by selecting only such parts as suited his particular views.* In drawing the character of Walpole, Bolingbroke is guilty of the grossest misrepresentation, and exaggerated malice. It is recorded of Zeuxis, the celebrated painter, that for the purpose of giving perfection to the portrait of Venus, he selected the most beautiful parts of the most beautiful women, and from the union of those parts, formed the goddess, without a single defect. In his political delineations, Bolingbroke has pursued the opposite line of conduct. He selected from the ministers of all times and countries, their prominent vices, and from their assemblage, drew the portrait of Walpole without a single virtue.

From the versatility of Bolingbroke's political life, no fundamental principle of action could be expected; for where is that principle which at some period he had not violated? Where was the party to which he had not rendered himself obnoxious? Nothing then remained for him, but to form a political creed as versatile as his life, and which, Proteus-like, adapted itself to all times, situations, and circumstances.

His doctrines are principally reduced under three heads: A government by prerogative, rather than by influence; coalition of parties;

* Life of Bolingbroke, p. 334.

the supposed perfection of the human species, in particular instances.

The leading principle of his writings was, that a government by prerogative was better than a government by influence. In enforcing this topic, the author betrays his aversion to the revolution, while he affects to praise it, by an assertion no less remarkable for its audacity than its untruth; namely, that the rights of the subject were more endangered by the system of influence, which had taken place since, than by that of arbitrary power which was pursued before that æra. That the crown had acquired more sources of power by the establishment of the funds, and nomination of revenue officers, and enjoyed the means of invading liberty more effectually by the constitution of the revenue, than it ever had been invaded by prerogative. He characterises prerogative as a mere *chimera*, and influence as *a new and undefinable monster, far more dangerous to our liberties.* He avers, that national corruption, which he makes the necessary consequence of investing the crown with the nomination of the officers employed in managing the revenue, is become universal, and that the loss of liberty is the natural and necessary consequence of national corruption. From these premises he draws the obvious conclusion, that it becomes highly necessary to prevent the ruin of the constitution, by reducing the power of the king, by means of an independent house of commons; and declares that the only method of effecting this, was to lessen the means of cor-

ruption, to revive frequent parliaments, and to insure their purity by introducing self-denying ordinances.

This tenet could only be supported by the other two doctrines, equally absurd and extravagant. The second of these doctrines was to enforce the *coalition of parties*, by which he understood that all the invidious distinctions of Whig and Tory,* Dissenter and Church-man, which had so long troubled and distracted the kingdom, should be sunk into those of court and country; the first of which he considers as *a faction and confederacy against the other;* and the second he characterises under the denomination of *constitutionalists.*

With a view to effect this purpose in a free country, in which party is an essential requisite, he drew out a system of policy so artfully contrived, that any man, whatever were his political opinions, might, without appearing to desert his own private notions of government, enlist himself under the banners of any opposition, or vote in favour of any question, however repugnant to his real sentiments, under the notion of opposing or driving out a corrupt minister, and the semblance of laying aside all prejudice and party attachment.

In attempting to *explode all former distinctions, to unite men of all denominations, and to change*

* The impossibility of reconciling the Whigs and the Tories, and the different views of those parties, are fully shown by his own confession, in a letter to Sir William Wyndham, July 23, 1739. Correspondence, Period VII.

the narrow spirit of party into a diffusive spirit of public benevolence, he well knew that he contradicted the history of past ages, and the experience of his own. He therefore broached the third doctrine, the supposed perfection of the human species, in particular instances. Convinced of the absurdity of asserting, that an opposition composed of heterogeneous parts, could continue uniformly true to their professed principles, and would not be divided or desert each other at the instigations of ambition or self-interest, he turned his hopes of success from the many to the few; to those few *who engross the whole reason of the species, who are born to instruct, to guide, and to preserve, and who are designed to be tutors and guardians of human kind.* Forgetting his own complaint, that *human passions are so strong, and human reason so weak,* he described men as they ought to be, and not as they are; men whom he represented *as stars still stuck in good plenty up and down our hemisphere, making virtue the foundation of their friendship, and merit the title to their favour; delighting rather to be thought good than great; just in all their dealings; moderate in their pleasures; not solicitous for a place because they want it, but because the place wants them.*

But still conscious that he over-rated the number of those chosen few, he concentrated the virtues and wisdom of the whole species into one man, A PATRIOT KING, whom he considered as born to form the happiness and glory of England, under whose government the *head, and all*

the members, should be united in one common cause, and animated by one common spirit.

In drawing this chimerical character, he laid down positions no less chimerical. He supposed that all distinctions of party, all cabals for favour, and all jealousy in individuals possessing, or contending for power, should be entirely suppressed by the wisdom and virtue of one man, whom he calls *a sort of standing miracle;* and that the people should be so perfect in judgment, and just in practice, as to acknowledge that they were made happy by such exertions. In this extraordinary attempt to reconcile the ideas of a government by prerogative, with those of liberty and happiness, he endeavours to bribe the imagination instead of convincing the judgment, by an artificial and brilliant display of all those scenes of splendour and domestic felicity which are so lavishly and exquisitely pourtrayed in the Cyropœdia of Xenophon, and Fenelon's Telemachus; scenes which adorn the page of the speculative philosopher, but must be considered as mere puerilities from a practical politician.

In giving these reveries to the public, he employed a specious philosophical jargon, then novel, and calculated to make an impression on ignorant minds; since become more common, and justly exploded, as the cant of hypocrisy or enthusiasm. Its pretensions were founded on candour, liberality of sentiment, universal philanthropy, and a tender concern for the happiness of posterity.

He described himself as labouring *to reinfuse the spirit of liberty, to reform the morals, and to raise the sentiments* of the people. He dwelt with rapture on the ideas of *perfect government, and the completion of social happiness.* He expatiated on the *moral system of the world, the system of infinite wisdom, the universal law of reason, of moral duty drawn from the constitution of human nature, of the general fitness of things.* He maintained *that the shortest and easiest method of arriving at real knowledge was, to trace back government to the first good principles on which it is founded; principles and measures of conduct founded on true propositions, all of which are obvious, many of them self-evident; principles laid in the system of human nature, drawn from that source from whence all the duties of public and private morality must be derived.* He boasted *of the noble prerogative of governing a society of freemen by a constitution founded on the eternal rules of right reason, and directed to promote the happiness of the whole, and every individual.* After some trite observations, that *the good of the people is the ultimate and true end of government, and that without liberty no happiness can be enjoyed by society,* he styles the king the *first servant of the people, considers his right as a trust, and their's, which he calls an indefeasible right, as a property.*

From the numberless contradictions and political absurdities to be found in almost every page of his works, I shall select two instances which relate to Walpole. After having described the *hideous monster, corruption,* and shown that

unless it was annihilated it would swallow up the constitution, and destroy *those liberties without which no happiness could be enjoyed by society*; after displaying the necessity of *shutting up with all the bars and bolts of law, the principal entries through which the torrents of corruption have been let in upon us*, he adds, *I say the principal entries, because, however it may appear in mere speculation, I think it would not be found in practice to be possible, no nor* ELIGIBLE *neither, to shut them up* ALL.

After having, in a long series of invectives, reprobated in every particular, and reproached the corruption of Walpole, ascribed to that all his power in the cabinet, and in the senate, branded him with the names of *high priest, first missionary, and treasurer of corruption*, he acknowledges that *the ascendency he had acquired could* NOT *be attributed to his superiority of parts,* OR HIS CLUMSY TALENT OF BRIBERY *alone, but that his long continuance in office must be ascribed to the faintness and indecisiveness of opposition.*

In fact, the noble writer himself lived to see the impracticability of his own speculative doctrines. He therefore looked forward to what he called better times, and left his visionary project as a legacy to posterity; *I turn myself*, he says, *from the generation that is going off, to the generation that is coming on the stage!* Thus in a few words he confessed, that all his writings, and all his labours were repugnant to the constitution of human nature, as exhibited by his own experience. Fortunately, the baneful effects

of Bolingbroke's influence were counteracted by the known profligacy of his principles, and the unpopularity of his character. For the public prejudice against him was so great, that Pulteney recommended his departure from England, because his co-operation rendered their cause less respectable.*

His speculative effusions, notwithstanding their splendour of diction and graces of style, are not consulted as containing just axioms or practical precepts; except by those who wish to avail themselves of the laxity of his political tenets, and his affectation of recurring to first principles and abstract doctrines, for the purpose of substituting a capricious and theoretical system, in the place of a well defined and limited government.†

* Lord Bolingbroke, to Sir William Wyndham, July 23, 1739. Correspondence, Period VII.

† The Works of Bolingbroke, principally alluded to, are The Occasional Writer, his Essays in the *Craftsman*, which were afterwards collected and re-published under the Titles of a *Dissertation on Parties*, with a sarcastical dedication to Sir Robert Walpole, and *Oldcastle's Remarks on the History of England; Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism, on the Idea of a Patriot King*, &c. His posthumous Letters on the Study of History, have been ably refuted in Horace Walpole's *Answer*, and in Leland's *Reflections*.

CHAPTER 26.

1723—1725.

Disturbances in Ireland, occasioned by Wood's Patent—Public and secret History of that Transaction—Character of Lord Middleton—His Disagreement with the Duke of Grafton—Indiscreet Proceedings of Government—Embarrassments and Conduct of Walpole—Duke of Grafton recalled, and Lord Carteret appointed Lord Lieutenant—Resignation of Lord Midleton—Surrender of the Patent—Tranquillity restored—Tumults in Scotland, on levying the Malt Tax—Prudent Conduct of Walpole—Character and Services of the Earl of Hay—Termination of the Commotion.

THE year 1725 teemed with events of the highest importance to the interest and security of England, both in regard to foreign and domestic affairs, and gave sufficient employment to the cabinet. The most important foreign transactions were the celebrated treaties of Vienna and Hanover; the domestic tranquillity was interrupted by disturbances in Ireland, arising from Wood's patent of coinage, and tumults in Scotland, both of which were suppressed by the prudence and vigour of Walpole.

No minister ever suffered more abuse for the indiscretion and violence of others, than Sir Robert Walpole. The tumults in Scotland, on account of the duty on malt, and the disturbances in Ireland, relating to Wood's patent, because they happened under his administra-

tion, were solely attributed to his misconduct; whereas the duty on malt was carried in the house of commons, by the country gentlemen, in opposition to his sentiments; and the grant of Wood's patent, was an unfortunate legacy, left by the earl of Sunderland, in which he had no other share, than in passing it when he was at the head of the treasury.

To judge by the accounts generally given of that transaction, it would appear a monster of despotism and fraud, that the coin was deficient in weight and goodness, and that the circulation of it would have been followed by the total ruin of Ireland.

In fact, the inimitable humour of Swift, which places the kingdom on one side, and William Wood on the other, has misled our judgment and captivated our imagination; most persons having formed their opinion from his Drapier's Letters and satirical poems, rather than from authentic documents, or well attested facts. The simple narrative of this transaction, stripped of the exaggerated dress in which the malignant wit of the author has invested it, is reduced to a short compass.

There being a great deficiency of copper currency in Ireland, the king granted to William Wood, a patent for coining farthings and halfpence, to the value of £.100,000 sterling, on certain terms which the patentee was bound to follow. William Wood, who in the party language of Swift, is ridiculed under the denomination of a *hardware man* and a *low mechanic*,

was a great proprietor and renter of iron works in England. He had a lease of all the mines on the crown lands in thirty-nine counties, was proprietor of several iron and copper works, and carried on, to a very considerable amount, manufactures for the different preparations of those metals.* Among many proposals submitted to government, that which he delivered was accepted, and was considered by all persons of judgment or capacity, not biassed by party or national prejudice, as beneficial to Ireland.

But the natives did not see it in so favourable a light, and before the money was circulated, a general ferment was excited. The ostensible causes of complaint were derived from the consideration, that the king had treated Ireland as a dependent kingdom;† that the patent was granted to a person who was not a native; that the coin was stamped in England, and that as a great profit was likely to be derived from it, the benefit should have principally accrued to the public. All the attempts of the duke of Grafton, then lord lieutenant, to subdue the public aversion were ineffectual. The spirit of opposition seized all orders of men, and even many of the king's servants, who held the chief places under his administration.

Inflamed by national zeal, the two houses passed addresses to the crown, accusing the patentee of fraud and deceit, asserting that the terms of the patent were infringed both in the

* Anderson's Commerce, vol. III. p. 124.

† See Primate Boulter's Letters.

quantity and quality of the coin, that the circulation of the halfpence would be highly prejudicial to the revenue, destructive of the commerce, and of most dangerous consequence to the rights and properties of the subjects. The commons, with an absurdity and effrontery hardly credible, declared, that even had the terms of the patent been complied with, the nation would have suffered a loss at least of *one hundred and fifty per cent!* Indeed the whole clamour rested on partial or ignorant representations. It was not at that time expected or dwelt on as a matter of speculative propriety, that the weight of the copper coin should be adequate to its circulating value. The assertion that Wood had carried on notorious frauds and deceits in the coinage, as advanced by Swift, and that the intrinsic was not equal to one-eighth of the nominal value, was proved to be false by an assay made at the mint, under Sir Isaac Newton, and his two associates, men of no less honour than capacity, the result of which was, that in weight, goodness, and fineness, it rather exceeded, than fell short of the conditions of the patent.

But the clamour, however unjust, was raised, and became general; and it was a necessary act of prudence, not to increase the ferment, by forcing upon a nation what was considered as unjust and fraudulent. Lord Carteret, who succeeded the duke of Grafton in the office of lord lieutenant, failed no less than his predecessor, in all his endeavours to obtain the introduction

of the copper money. The patent was therefore surrendered, and tranquillity restored. Wood, as an indemnification for the loss he had sustained, received pensions to the amount of £.3,000 a year for eight years.*

Such is the public history of Wood's patent; and it is difficult to conceive by what means or by what intrigues this simple transaction, calculated for the benefit of Ireland, and in which not a single right was infringed, or a single grievance inflicted, could be so misunderstood and perverted, as to create a general ferment, and nearly to overthrow the administration of Townshend and Walpole. The secret history of this event, which the documents, under my inspection, enable me to give, will assist in tracing the motives and causes which gave rise to the disturbances, and finally occasioned the surrender of the patent.

The emoluments arising from the disposal of the patent for supplying Ireland with copper coin, were given by Sunderland to the duchess of Kendal, who sold it to Wood. Sunderland had warmly recommended it to his friend the duke of Bolton, who was at that time lord lieutenant; but he met with much difficulty in his attempts to support the project under hand, and he had neither courage nor inclination to propose a scheme, which he foresaw would greatly embarrass his administration. On his death, the duke of Grafton was promoted to that high office, at the recommendation of Walpole. He

* Correspondence, vol. 2.—Article, Wood's Patent.

consented to bring it forward, and was promised the support of the king's friends in Ireland.

Walpole, on succeeding Sunderland at the head of the treasury, instantly saw and appreciated the difficulties in which this transaction would involve him; and with as much frankness as his situation at that time would permit, remonstrated against the grant, as likely to become unpopular. But being unwilling to offend the duchess of Kendal, the extent of whose influence over the king he had unfortunately experienced, reluctantly submitted to what he could not prevent, and employed every means in his power to remedy the abuses and obviate the difficulties. He took the advice of the attorney and solicitor general, obtained the ratification of the lord chancellor of England, and by proper assays at the mint, secured the execution of the terms stipulated by the patent, which at length passed the usual forms, and was sent to the lord lieutenant for the purpose of being put into execution.

When the duke of Grafton returned to Ireland in August 1723, things were in a state very different from that in which they had been erroneously represented to him by the English cabinet. He found a ferment rising in the nation; a general aversion to the patent; and a most decided opposition from those who, as he had reason to believe, had promised their warmest support. The character and conduct of the duke of Grafton, were not calculated to conciliate parties, or to restore union and har-

mony in a country like Ireland, distracted with troubles, and abounding with persons disaffected to the English government. He was a nobleman of high honour and disinterested probity; but proud and imperious, fretful and choleric, and highly conscious of his dignified situation. Though by no means deficient in abilities, yet he did not possess sufficient skill and address to guide the helm of state in a difficult period. He was well characterised by his friend, Walpole, as *a fair weather pilot, that did not know how to act when the first storm arose.*

The success of the measure was principally impeded by the unexpected and inflexible opposition of lord chancellor Midleton, who has on that account, incurred the bitter reproaches of Walpole, Townshend, and the duke of Grafton, in their correspondence with each other. Upon a candid review of his conduct, however, it appears that he was actuated by no improper motives, but, in common with many other persons in Ireland, considered the plan imprudently introduced, and inimical to the true interests of the country. The private letters which passed between him, his brother, and son, and which are published in the Correspondence,* afford a clear explanation of his motives; and a comparison of them with those of the two ministers, and of the duke of Grafton, will relieve the characters of each party from much of that obloquy which flowed from the rage of discordant politics.

* See Correspondence, vol. 2.—Article, Wood's Patent.

Alan Brodrick,* descended from an illustrious family, whose ancestors may be traced from the conquest, was second son of Sir Saint John Brodrick, knight, of Richmond in Yorkshire, and of Wandsworth, who obtained a grant of lands, in the county of Monaghan, during the government of Oliver Cromwell. For his essential services in assisting the restoration, he procured a farther grant of a large estate in the county of Corke, and obtained a charter from Charles the Second, for the town of Midleton, to return two members to parliament.

Alan, his son, was bred up to the law, and rose to great eminence in that profession. In 1695, he was appointed solicitor general, and being chosen member for the city of Corke in 1703, he was unanimously elected speaker of the house of commons, attached himself to the Whigs, and having opposed some bills which were favoured by the duke of Ormond, lord lieutenant, he was removed from the place of solicitor general. In 1707, when the Whig administration was formed, he was made attorney general, and in 1709, chief justice of the Queen's Bench; but was removed in 1711, when the Tories came into power. He was chosen, in 1713, member for the county of Corke, and again elected speaker by the Whigs, in opposition to the castle interest.

During the last years of queen Anne, he proved his faithful attachment to the religion

* Lodge's Irish Peerage.—Communications from the honourable William Brodrick.

and constitution, by promoting the succession of the house of Hanover, and was highly instrumental in counteracting the cabals of those who were inclined to restore the Pretender. In reward for these eminent services, he was, at the accession of George the First, nominated chancellor of Ireland; in 1715, was created a peer, by the title of baron Brodrick; and, in 1717, advanced to the dignity of viscount Midleton. In the same year he was also chosen member of the British Parliament, for Midhurst, in Sussex, which borough he continued to represent till his death. When the functions of his high office did not render his presence necessary in Ireland, his eloquence and abilities were useful in supporting the measures of government in England.

As he considered himself obliged to Sunderland for his promotion to an Irish peerage, he attached himself to the party of that minister. But neither his obligation nor interest could induce him to swerve from his duty to his country, or to support administration in measures which he disapproved. He resisted all the solicitations, offers, and menaces of Sunderland, to vote in favour of the peerage bill, and he persisted in opposition to the request of the lord lieutenant, and the orders of the sovereign. The minutes* of his conversations with Sunderland and others on that occasion, and the rules which he laid down for his conduct, afford evident

* Correspondence.—Article, Peerage Bill.

proofs of his integrity and firmness, and do honour to his memory. His refusal in this instance offended Sunderland, and nothing but the difficulty of finding a proper successor for the office of lord chancellor prevented his disgrace. He was treated, however, with so much coldness and disregard, that for three years he expected every moment to be dismissed; a situation of uncertainty, which he bore with unexampled patience and dignity.

On the death of Sunderland, Midleton attached himself to Carteret, in opposition to Townshend and Walpole. He joined to a natural warmth and vehemence of temper, which he himself was the first to acknowledge, an high consciousness of his own talents and influence, which produced an unbending pertinacity of opinion, and a display, often ostentatious, of his own services and importance. He possessed great dignity of sentiment, and a spirit so independent, that he would not permit even his personal esteem for the king to bias his conduct in the duties of his high station. He considered the salary of office his due for his exertions as chancellor, and thought himself at liberty to act, vote, and speak in parliament (as a lord) just in the same manner while he was on the woolsack, as he would have done on one of the benches.*

The warmth of his temper was increased by the still greater warmth of his brother and son.

His elder brother, Thomas Brodrick, had from

* See Correspondence.

his first entrance into life, uniformly promoted the Protestant succession. He was a member of the privy council to king William, and sat in the English parliament for the borough of Stockbridge, and afterwards for Guildford; and in the Irish parliament for the county of Corke. In consideration of his services, he was by the Whig administration made comptroller of the salt duties, and joint comptroller of the army with Sir Philip Meadows; which places he resigned in 1711, when the Tories came into power. On the accession of George the First, he was again appointed a member of the privy council, but was not gratified with any place. As chairman of the secret committee for the examination of the South Sea affairs, he acquired great popularity, and stood forth one of the warmest advocates for severe measures against the directors, and those who had promoted the South Sea scheme. As a Whig, he was strongly attached to the principles of that party; generally supported government, but not uniformly; possessed great weight among the country gentlemen inclined to the Whig interest, and not unfrequently carried questions in opposition to the known sentiments of the minister. He was held in high estimation by the king, as the head of a family which had ever shown an unabated zeal in favour of his succession; had been courted by Sunderland, and after his death, by Carteret and Roxburgh. He was a man of high spirit and probity; but his temper was violent, captious, and overbearing.

Saint John Brodrick, son of lord Midleton, was not deficient in talents and knowledge; possessed great skill in debating, which he managed with good effect in the Irish house of commons, where his father's advice and interest rendered him highly respected. He was presumptuous and confident; sanguine in his hopes, and vehement in his pursuits, affecting great foresight, sagacity and discernment. He was highly irritable, readily provoked, but open to flattery and easy of delusion. He was first chosen a member of the Irish parliament for the borough of Midleton, and afterwards represented, until his death, the city of Corke. In 1721, he sat in the English parliament, for Beralston, in Devonshire, and in 1722 was returned for the same borough.

Both the brother and son caballed with lord Carteret, and seem to have conceived a violent antipathy to Walpole, which was heightened by his opposition to the bill for permitting the importation of Irish calicoes. The proud consciousness entertained by lord Midleton of his abilities and influence in Ireland, was increased by accounts transmitted from his brother and son, of the king's high sense of the services rendered by the whole family, and by Carteret's repeated declarations, that he alone was capable of governing the country. His opposition received an additional impulse from the sanguine representations of his son, that the power of Walpole was declining, and a full conviction that the combination of Cadogan,

Carteret, and Roxburgh, would triumph in the cabinet.

An unfortunate misunderstanding had taken place between the duke of Grafton and lord Midleton, who, as one of the lords justices, had directed the administration of affairs, and conscious of his influence in the two houses of parliament, expected to retain the same power on the arrival of the new lord lieutenant. The duke of Grafton, however, was by no means inclined to place implicit confidence in the chancellor, who had shown so many proofs of an intractable temper, and hostility to Walpole. He courted the opposite party in the cabinet, and particularly consulted his competitor for authority, William Conolly, speaker of the house of commons, by whom he was almost implicitly directed. On his arrival in Ireland in 1723, he was offended at the chancellor, for disrespectful behaviour, and bitterly complained to the archbishop of Dublin, who being inimical to Wood's patent, did not conceal, or perhaps exaggerated the dissatisfaction of the lord lieutenant. The conduct of lord Midleton in parliament was so offensive to the duke of Grafton, that he connived at the passing of a vote of censure in the house of lords, on the 23d of December 1723, for delays of justice, occasioned by his absence from Ireland. This insult, solely ascribed by lord Midleton to the duke of Grafton, increased the misunderstanding; and the duke peremptorily insisted on his exclusion from the number of lords justices during his absence.

These jealousies, fomented by Carteret, laid the foundation of a successful opposition to the introduction of Wood's coinage, which opposition was aided by the concurrence of indiscreet and unpopular proceedings.

Great discredit was thrown upon the measure, by a report, industriously circulated, that the profits of the patent were to be shared between Wood and the duchess of Kendal. This fact was insidiously communicated by Carteret, to Alan Brodrick, second son of lord Midleton, during his visit at Hanover, transmitted by him to his friends in Dublin, and soon made public by various allusions of Swift, in his writings and political ballads, in one of which he says:

> "*When late a feminine magician,*
> "Join'd with a brazen politician,
> "Expos'd, to blind a nation's eyes,
> "A parchment of prodigious size."*

The indiscretion of Wood, and of his friends in Ireland, was also detrimental to his cause. They exaggerated the quantity of coin to be issued, and the gains which would accrue to the patentee, and made repeated boasts of his power and influence in the English cabinet. Wood himself offended the privy council, by observing, that if a proclamation was necessary, he could have it, or any thing that was wanting to inforce the currency of his coin; and that the complaints and remonstrances were not intended against him, but against the king and ministry for making the grant.

* A Simile on our Want of Silver, and the only Way to remedy it.

The misconduct of government was still greater. The patent was passed without formally consulting either the lord lieutenant or privy council, and its contents were concealed in Ireland. By which means exaggerated rumours of its evil tendency were diffused, which were universally credited, and not found to be false until their wide circulation had made an indelible impression on the public mind. The lord lieutenant landed on the 13th of August. Assuming the reins of government, he publicly declared, that he was perfectly unconcerned in the event, that the patent was passed before he was made acquainted that it was in agitation, and that he had no instructions about it from the king or the ministry. On the 13th of September, an address was presented from both houses, requesting information concerning the patent. In his answer, returned the 14th, he declared that he had neither the patent, nor any copy, nor even any paper which would give them any satisfaction; but on the 16th, when the house was actually assembled with a view to make a strong remonstrance on the subject, Hopkins, the secretary to the lord lieutenant, informed the speaker, that a person attended without with the exemplification of the patent, which, by mistake, had been delivered to the lord lieutenant's servant, instead of his private secretary, and mislaid.

Even after the irresistible opposition which showed itself in parliament, no attempts were made to conciliate those members who were

against the patent. On the contrary, some were received at the castle with coldness; others were treated with marks of indignity; and Saint John Brodrick was slighted and offended. By these means, the lord lieutenant precluded all confidential intercourse with the chancellor and his friends, who were prevented from explaining the motives of their conduct, and undeceiving him in those points in which he had been misinformed.

The conduct of Walpole himself was not at first marked with his usual caution. He suffered the lord lieutenant to depart without specific instructions in what manner he was to act, should the parliament oppose the introduction of the coinage. He trusted too much to the representations of those who were friends to government, and who were either ignorant of the real situation of affairs, or unwilling to offend, by transmitting disagreeable truths which they well knew would be communicated by others. He did not sufficiently appreciate the great influence of the chancellor and his family in both houses of parliament, and when that influence appeared predominant, he attributed the strength of opposition solely to the combination of the Brodricks with lord Carteret. He bitterly accused lord Midleton of treachery and low cunning, of having made, in his speeches, distinctions between the king and his ministers, of caballing with Carteret, Cadogan, and Roxburgh, and of pursuing that line of conduct, because he was of opinion the opposite party would gain the ascen-

dancy in the cabinet. He did not believe the disturbances to be so serious as they were represented, nor was he satisfied with the duke of Grafton's conduct, as being solely directed by Conolly, but declared that the part acted by *Conolly, almost excused what the Brodricks had done.**

Notwithstanding this confession, he resolved to support the duke of Grafton in his resentment against the chancellor, and obtained from the king a promise, that he should be removed whenever it was thought expedient, and the formal notification was made by lord Carteret to the lord lieutenant. But his removal was considered at the present moment impracticable, by the temper and situation of Ireland, and by the influence of lord Midleton's friends in the British cabinet.

Carteret complained to the king, that his majesty's name and authority had been used to gratify the private pique and resentment of the lord lieutenant against the chancellor; imputed the disturbances of Ireland principally to that source, and induced the king to declare that those ought to be employed who were most capable of serving him. Thomas Brodrick, in an audience of the king, expostulated against the proposed indignity of excluding his brother from the list of lords justices, proved the weakness of the duke of Grafton's government, and the preponderancy of the chancellor's party, which sufficiently appeared from the vote of congratula-

* Correspondence.

tion, passed by the commons, in favour of lord Midleton, contrary to the avowed influence of the lord lieutenant. This remonstrance effectually convinced the king of the improper measures which had been hitherto pursued, and irritated him to such a degree, that Walpole became ashamed and uneasy at the conduct of the lord lieutenant, which brought him into the greatest difficulties he had ever experienced. He discovered that he had been deceived by the misrepresentations sent from Ireland; he found that lord Midleton had great power and influence, and could not be excluded in the formation of a cabinet. Resolved to withdraw his support from the duke of Grafton, and effect his removal, he had determined to obtain the appointment either for the duke of Bolton, or the duke of Dorset; and the arrangement was on the point of being concluded, when the duke of Argyle embarrassed him, by claiming that high dignity for himself. This unexpected demand suspended the execution of his plan, and together with the increasing ferment in Ireland, rendered it expedient to adopt a new line of conduct. He found that a question of the highest consequence was involved in this dispute, no less than the independence of Ireland; a favourite topic, urged by Molineux, promoted by the archbishop of Dublin, and ably supported by Swift, in his Drapier's Letters, and other publications. He was too prudent to suffer this delicate subject to be discussed in parliament. He held frequent conferences with Saint John

Brodrick, who had taken his seat in the English parliament, attentively listened to his accounts of the proceedings, confessed that he had been grossly misled, spoke in terms of the highest respect of the chancellor's character and talents, insinuated that the duke of Grafton was about to be recalled, and was only continued in his post until a proper successor could be appointed; disclaimed any intention of excluding lord Midleton from being one of the lords justices, and succeeded in softening, the violent asperity which had long distinguished that family.

At this period the struggle in the cabinet,* which terminated in the triumph of Townshend and Walpole, was finally decided. It was their original intention to remove Carteret intirely, but the embarrassment arising from the claim of the duke of Argyle, and the great difficulty of managing Ireland, rendered it necessary to find a person who would promote the patent, and be likely to persuade lord Midleton, and those who acted with him, to soften their opposition. In this dilemma, lord Carteret was removed from the office of secretary of state to the lord lieutenancy of Ireland. Lord Midleton continued in the office of chancellor, was constituted one of the lords justices, and Saint John Brodrick was nominated a member of the privy council.

At the same time every effort was made to conciliate the people of Ireland, and induce them to receive the currency. A report was drawn by

* See chapter 24.

Walpole,* and submitted to the king in council. After fully justifying Wood from the charge of not having fulfilled the terms of his contract, and showing that his halfpence exceeded in value and weight the conditions required in the patent, it recommended to the king, that instead of £.100,000, Wood should be permitted to import into Ireland only £. 40,000, to be current to such as voluntarily pleased to accept them. The king sent his order in conformity to this advice.

The report, though drawn with great precision and clearness, made no impression. It was answered by Swift in the Drapier's Letters. His hardy assertions and false representations were implicitly believed, and the popular outcry was so violent, that the lords justices refused to issue the orders for the circulation of the coin. A general panic seized even the king's best friends, who were apprehensive of popular commotions. People of all descriptions and parties flocked in crowds to the bankers to demand their money, and drew their notes with an express condition, to be paid in gold or silver. The publishers of the most treasonable pamphlets escaped with impunity, provided Wood and his patent were introduced into the work. The grand juries could scarcely be induced to find any bill against such delinquents; no witnesses in the prosecution were safe in their persons; and no juries were

* The original is in Sir Robert Walpole's hand-writing, among the Orford Papers.

inclined, or if inclined could venture, to find them guilty.* Not content with refusing to bring in a bill of indictment against the printer of the Drapier's Letters, the grand jury of Dublin, in a presentment drawn by Swift, presented all persons as enemies to the government, who should endeavour, by fraud or otherwise, to impose Wood's halfpence on the people.

In this alarming state of affairs, Walpole acted with becoming moderation. He saw that it would be madness to attempt introducing the copper currency by force; that to repeat the orders to the lords justices, who had declared their resolution not to obey them, would only again expose the king's honour, without the smallest hopes of success: that although to permit them to continue after that refusal, would be to renounce for ever all authority of the crown; yet to remove them on this account, would increase their popularity, and enable them to counteract the measures of government.† He resolved, therefore, to act a temporising part; to send over lord Carteret to bring the people gradually to a proper temper; to suspend or surrender the patent as circumstances required; and, after the restoration of tranquillity, to remove the chancellor, and appoint new lords justices, of whom, at least the majority, should be natives of England.

On his arrival in Ireland, Carteret found himself in a very delicate and embarrassed situation, and at first view his whole conduct in this

* Primate Boulter's Letters. † Correspondence.

transaction is mysterious and inexplicable. He had secretly opposed the patent, fomented the discontents and jealousies of lord Midleton and the Brodricks, and excited, underhand, the disturbances in Ireland. In the frequent conferences which he held with Thomas and Saint John Brodrick, accounts of which were transmitted to lord Midleton, he appeared so hostile to the patent, that Saint John Brodrick says of him, "Lord Carteret is perfectly free from all *suspicion* of being concerned in, or wishing well to this base project;"* and lord Midleton suspected that Wood's patent would be insisted on by Walpole, merely to embarrass lord Carteret, and create difficulties in his administration.† But he had no sooner taken upon him the office of lord lieutenant, than he promoted the introduction of the copper coin with so much zeal, as induced lord Midleton, who was astonished at the change of his sentiments, to observe, that he could not have employed more industry to attain his end, even if the success of his labours was to be attended with an entire restitution of the favour and authority which he formerly enjoyed.

The motives of his conduct are well explained by lord Midleton, in his letters to his brother. His secret sentiments were strongly in favour of the patent, because it was proposed by his friend Sunderland, and he always maintained its validity, as derived from the prerogative of the king,

* Saint John Brodrick to lord Midleton, May 10, 1724.

† Correspondence, p. 425.

which vested in the crown the right of coining money. But with a view to embarrass Walpole and Townshend, he secretly favoured the opposition in Ireland, caballed with the Brodricks, spoke slightingly of the duke of Grafton, and insinuated that the duchess of Kendal had a share in the profits. He exaggerated the alarm, and irritated the king by repeated representations, that the discontents in Ireland were owing to the umbrage which the duke of Grafton had given to lord Midleton. His hopes of overturning his rivals by these means were so sanguine, as induced him to acknowledge to Saint John Brodrick, that the patent was the luckiest incident that could have occurred in favour of his party in the cabinet. But he was no sooner convinced that his credit with the king was declining, and that he should be removed from the office of secretary of state, than he prevented his total disgrace by agreeing to accept the lord lieutenancy under the promise of promoting the patent, and of prevailing with his friend lord Midleton to desist from his opposition. He confided in his own efforts and address to effect the introduction of the money, when lowered to £. 40,000; and to stop the discussion on the question, concerning the independency of Ireland.

In conformity with these promises, lord Carteret employed all his address, and used the great influence which he possessed over his friend, to prevail on him to promote, or at least not to oppose the introduction of the coin. But

all his efforts failed. Neither flattery, promises, nor threats, had any effect; Midleton uniformly and decidedly persisted in his opposition. While he expressed the highest obligation to the lord lieutenant, he declared that his duty to his country was paramount to every other consideration, and refused to give any assistance to government, until the patent was absolutely surrendered. This conduct drew upon him the resentment of his former friend. He was received at the castle with coldness and reserve, and considered as an enemy to the king's government; he accordingly resigned the seals with disgust, in May, 1725, and Richard West, one of the king's counsel, was appointed lord chancellor in his place.

The inflexibility of lord Midleton having annihilated all hopes of success; the king followed the advice suggested by Walpole, and consented to procure the surrender of the patent. In the speech from the throne, the lord lieutenant observed, "I have his majesty's commands at the "opening of this session, to acquaint you, that "an entire end is put to the patent, formerly "granted to Mr. Wood, for the coining of copper "halfpence and farthings for this kingdom, by a "full and effectual surrender thereof to his "majesty, an exemplification of which, under the "great seal of Great Britain, shall be laid before "you. So remarkable an instance of his majes-"ty's royal favour and condescension, must fill "the hearts of a loyal and obedient people with "the highest sense of duty and gratitude; and I "doubt not, but you will make such suitable

"returns as may convince the world, that you "are truly sensible of the happiness you have "enjoyed under his majesty's most mild and gra- "cious government, ever since his accession to the "throne of these kingdoms; and that the pre- "servation of all our religious and civil rights "must ever be owing, under God, to the support "of his majesty's government, and the succes- "sion in his royal house."*

The gracious manner in which the surrender of the patent was announced, in compliance with the wishes of the nation, did not satisfy the party in opposition. Their great object was to show that the surrender was solely owing to the king, and to cast reproaches on the English administration, as if they had occasioned the disturbances, by promoting the patent, and had been uniformly averse to its revocation. With this view, when the primate moved an address of thanks to the lord lieutenant for his speech at the opening of the session, particularly to express their grateful sense of the *king's goodness and condescension for putting an end to Wood's patent*, the archbishop of Dublin proposed inserting the words, "*and great wisdom*," observing, in justification of this amendment, that the ministers had been the authors of the patent, but that the king had been *wise* enough to see the mischiefs, and accordingly revoked it. He was powerfully seconded by lord Midleton, and the motion for the amendment was carried. For the purpose of counteracting this suggestion, the

* Historical Register, 1725.

primate laid before the committee, an address somewhat differing in form from the resolution of the house, and with the omission of the words *great wisdom;* but the lords in opposition insisting, that the committee was bound to receive those expressions, the primate was compelled to add them. On the 23d, however, the friends of government obtained their point. When the report of the address from the committee was laid before the house; a motion was made to leave out the obnoxious words; and after a strenuous opposition, in which lord Midleton exerted himself with great ability and with much petulance, was carried by 21 against 12.*

This victory decided, in favour of government, the struggle in the house of lords, and the decision of the first question in the commons, promised a similar issue. An address was moved, acknowledging the king's great goodness and condescension in obtaining a full and effectual surrender of the patent, and expressing a grateful sense of all favours, and of the many blessings enjoyed under his mild and gracious government. The unanimity with which this address was carried, without a single dissenting voice, seemed to augur a quiet and successful session; but the friends of lord Midleton, amongst whom Saint John Brodrick was the most able and the most violent, excited a warm opposition, which required some time and much management before it subsided.

When a proposal for a supply was laid before

* Primate Boulter's Letters, p. 35.

the house, it was agreed to in general terms; but the grant was delayed under various pretences. A committee being appointed to examine the public accounts, and the amount of the national debt, the statement of government was not allowed. The debt was said to be magnified with a view to obtain a larger sum than was requisite; and it was particularly objected, that no credit was given for cash in the hands of the collectors, and for several solvent branches of the revenue not yet received; various resolutions were passed, which embarrassed government, or delayed the payment of the army; a tax on salaries, profits of employment, places and pensions, was carried in opposition to the castle interest: But after some struggle, the ways and means were voted,* and on the 8th of March, 1726, the lord lieutenant put an end to this stormy session.

The ferment having subsided, and public confidence being restored by prudent compliances, lord Midleton quitted Ireland, and settled in England, until the time of his death.† Carteret

* Proceedings of the parliament in Ireland, Historical Register for 1725.

† Before his return to England, Fawkener, the printer, requested permission to dedicate the Drapier's Letters to him, as the preserver of Irish liberty, and the father of his country, but he declined it in terms of high indignation.

It redounds, indeed, much to his honour, that although lord Midleton refused to support the patent, yet, he condemned, in the strongest terms, the violent conduct of Swift, and of his patron the archbishop of Dublin, whom he represents as the two persons from whose politics and wrangling, Ireland had received more damage than it would have been in the power of its worst enemies to have

was permitted to retain only a nominal power; the principal authority was vested in Dr. Hugh Boulter, who had been raised from the bishopric of Bristol, to the primacy of Ireland, and a resolution was adopted of filling the high charges of state with the natives of England, which the primate considered as an essential requisite for the maintenance of public tranquillity, and for the ease of those who governed in Ireland.*

During the progress of the disturbances in Ireland, Scotland became the scene of similar agitations.

Since the Union, the natives of Scotland had objected to the payment of many taxes imposed by the British parliament on the united kingdoms, and had shown themselves particularly averse to the duty on malt, which they long evaded under various pretences.

The English country gentlemen were highly dissatisfied with this exemption of Scotland from a burthen which was considered as heavy and grievous. Accordingly, on the 7th of February 1724, when in a committee of ways and means, the continuance of the malt tax was proposed, Thomas Brodrick moved an adjournment for the purpose of considering of a method for obliging Scotland to pay a proportionate part of the duty on malt. Walpole, foreseeing

brought upon it.—Lord Midleton to Thomas Brodrick, November 17, 1724. Correspondence.—Lord Midleton died in 1727.

* Primate Boulter's Letters, p. 19. The contents of this chapter are principally drawn from the letters in the Orford, Townshend, Walpole, and Midleton Papers. Correspondence, Period III.

the evil effects which might result from using compulsory means, opposed the motion;* but finding the sense of the house against him, prudently suffered the adjournment to pass without a division. On the next meeting, however, of the committee, February 10, he contrived to evade any alteration in the bill, which was continued as usual for one year. But the clamours of the country gentlemen were so violent, that in the next session it was proposed, instead of the duties on malt in Scotland, to lay a duty of sixpence on every barrel of beer or ale; and the question was carried by a majority of 133 votes against 41.†

This act had scarcely passed before the people of Scotland were influenced by mistatements of its tendency, and by a partial representation of the relative situations of Scotland and England. A legal argument was drawn up with much skill, put into familiar language, circulated with great activity, and had an alarming effect upon the public mind. It was thus stated: The Scots act of Charles the Second, passed in 1681. It declares that the right of succession to the crown shall devolve according to proximity of blood; that no difference in religion can alter or divert it; and that it is high treason, by writing, speaking, or otherwise to endeavour any alteration or diversion, or to debar the successor from the immediate, actual, and free administration

* Saint John Brodrick to lord Midleton, February 8, 1723. Correspondence.

† Political State for December, 1724, p. 593.

of the government. The only bar to the validity of this act is, the treaty of Union, which was contracted by two independent kingdoms, and was to remain in force as long, and no longer, than each fulfilled its articles. It is universally acknowledged by the public law of nations, and confirmed by the reason of the law which prevails in private contracts, that the violation of any material articles of a compact, is a legal dissolution of the whole. The resolutions of the house of commons, which transferred the duty on malt, to a duty on beer, being contrary to the 6th and 7th articles of the Union, will dissolve that Union; the dissolution of the Union, by bringing the Scots act into force, instantly dethrones George the First, and renders the next in succession of the Stuart line king of Scotland. The people are released from their oath to the dissolved government, and under no obligation to obey the laws of the revenue; and the commissions of the judges who are entrusted with the execution of those laws, are become void. It was also observed, that the annals of history afford many instances where infractions of compacts, though considered at the time of little consequence, have proved no less destructive to the party which made the encroachments, than to those who were oppressed. Israel having once revolted, upon a trifling occasion, from Judah, the seat of government, powerful in wealth and arms, could never be reduced to obedience, and became a separate kingdom. Sweden joined to Denmark by the union of

Calmar, was released from dependence by the breach of that union on the part of Denmark; and a defender was found in Gustavus Vasa, who restored liberty to his native country. The United Provinces, oppressed by taxes, and shackled in the free exercise of religion, shook off the yoke of Spain, under the powerful government of Philip the Second; the Scots gave sufficient proofs of their resistance to repeated oppressions under the reigns of Charles the Second, and James the Seventh, and they are now called upon to resist the tyranny of the minister, who keeps the king and country in chains, and is attempting to rivet a tax on this country, which is an infringement of the Union, and hostile to their liberty and independence.*

These representations had a strong effect, and a general ferment took place, in a country which teemed with Jacobites, and where, according to the expressions of the earl of Ilay, *by a long series of no-administration, the mere letter of the law had little or no effect with the people.* The public discontents broke out at Glasgow on the 21st of June, when the commissioners of the excise were preparing to do their duty, and the people threatened to stone them if they attempted to visit the malt-houses. Application being made to general Wade, commander in chief of the forces in that part of Scotland, he sent two companies of soldiers, under the command of captain Bushel, for the purpose of supporting the commissioners, and quelling any riot.

* Grant's Letter to Sir Robert Walpole. Orford Papers.

The populace assembled in considerable numbers, repeatedly exclaiming, "Down with Walpole, and up with Seaforth;—the Mackensies "are up in the north, and will soon come to our "assistance."* They broke open and plundered the house of Daniel Campbell, member for the city; assaulted and drove away the troops, who were finally compelled in their own defence to fire; and after killing and wounding, three or four, retreated in good order to Dumbarton.

General Wade, informed of these events, marched with a large body of troops to Glasgow, and accompanied by Duncan Forbes, the lord advocate of Scotland, took quiet possession of the city; apprehended some of the rioters, arrested the magistrates, and conveyed them prisoners to Edinburgh, for being accessary, or at least for having connived at the tumults, and taken no pains to discover the rioters. They were tried by the lords justiciaries; acquitted, and immediately discharged. Captain Bushel, who had been arraigned for murder, according to the forms of law, was convicted and condemned; but, as the orders by which he commanded his troops to fire, had been dictated by self-defence, he was pardoned and promoted in the service. The rioters at Glasgow were brought to trial; yet such was the lenity of government, that four only, after being scourged, were sentenced to transportation, and one

* General Wade's Letter to the duke of Newcastle, July 1, 1726. Walpole Papers.

woman was condemned to stand thrice in the pillory.

Although this tumult at Glasgow, and the riots which took place in a few other towns were suppressed, yet they gave rise to an affair at Edinburgh, which threatened the most serious consequences. The magistrates of Glasgow had been accompanied to Edinburgh by a large body of the inhabitants, who reproached the people for betraying the interests of their country; and upbraided them, that by submitting to the law, they would become the instruments of wreathing about their necks the insupportable bonds of the malt tax.* The acquittal of the magistrates being considered as a victory over government, the popular discontents increased to an alarming degree. The brewers entered into a combination not to give security for the discharge of the new duty, and not to brew, if they were judicially called upon for payment. All the maltsters in Scotland depended on this combination of the Edinburgh brewers, who were considered as the champions of Scottish liberty.†

The cause of the brewers was highly popular among all ranks and distinctions of men, not only of those who were not employed by Government, but even of those who were invested with authority. Some of the lords justiciaries were timid, or lukewarm, others secretly averse to the imposition of the tax; while the justices

* Letter from John Campbell to Sir Robert Walpole. Correspondence.

† Letter from the earl of Ilay to Mr. Stewart. Correspondence.

of the peace, and the magistrates of the principal towns, openly expressed their disapprobation.

But the greatest obstruction arose from the conduct of the duke of Roxburgh, secretary of state for Scotland. Strongly attached to Carteret and Cadogan, he had joined them in attempting to remove Townshend and Walpole; and aware that his dismission had been recommended to the king, on the removal of Carteret, still continued to augment the division in the cabinet. He now secretly encouraged the discontents in Scotland, and counteracted or delayed the orders of government, which, in virtue of his office, were issued by him. A general opinion also prevailed, that a firm resolution to resist the new imposts with unabating zeal, would be attended with a success similar to the event of the opposition which had been recently made in Ireland to Wood's coinage, where the unanimous voice of the country was on the eve of obtaining from government the surrender of the patent.

The brewers were still farther encouraged by rumours industriously circulated by persons of credit and consequence, that these severe measures were adopted by the regency, contrary to the inclinations of the king, only for the purpose of supporting Walpole; that in the next session of parliament he would be disgraced; that the chief power would be lodged in the hands of Pulteney, in conjunction with the duke of Roxburgh; and that those who now submitted

would be exposed to the resentment of the new administration, and the fury of the populace.

In this dilemma, the minister, with the approbation of the regency, deputed Archibald, earl of Ilay, lord keeper of the privy seal in Scotland, to Edinburgh, armed with full powers from government, and privately instructed by Walpole, who tempered the violent orders sent from Hanover. The removal of the duke of Roxburgh from the office of secretary of state, which was adopted at the earnest request of Walpole, soon convinced the deluded people, that they had been imposed upon by the enemies of government, in supposing the minister disagreeable to the king, and that his opponents would be triumphant. General Wade, in pursuance of the act of parliament passed in the preceding year, disarmed the highlanders of the most disaffected clans, and the inhabitants of the Isles of Mull and Sky. The spirit and zeal of lord Ilay, broke the combination at Edinburgh, and restored tranquillity. To him Walpole wholly attributed the final suppression of the riots; and the warm praises of his conduct, which he transmitted to the king, do honour to the exertions of the one, and to the gratitude of the other.

From this period lord Ilay became the person in whom Walpole implicitly confided for the management of the Scottish affairs, which he conducted with great ability and prudence, and with so much real authority, that he was called the king of Scotland. The rise, progress, and

termination of these tumults, are minutely related in the correspondence which passed between Sir Robert Walpole, lord Townshend, and the earl of Ilay.*

Archibald, earl of Ilay, and afterwards duke of Argyle, on the death of his brother John, was second son of Archibald earl of Argyle. He was born at Ham House, at Petersham, in 1682, educated at Eton, and resided in England until he was about seventeen, when he was sent to the university of Glasgow. Being a younger brother, with a small fortune, he went to Utrecht, and made a considerable proficiency in the civil law, with a design to practise in that line. But his father being created a duke, he renounced this intention, and embraced the profession of arms. He was, when very young, appointed colonel of the 36th regiment of foot, and governor of Dumbarton castle. But finding himself more qualified for a statesman than a soldier, he quitted the army, and with his usual assiduity, employed himself in the acquisition of political knowledge. In 1705, he was appointed lord register of Scotland, and in the ensuing year, was nominated one of the commissioners for settling the Union. In consideration of his services, he was created earl of Ilay, and on the conclusion of the treaty, was chosen one of the sixteen peers of Scotland, and constantly elected in every future parliament, till his death, excepting that which assembled in 1713. His exclusion at that time, was owing to the zeal

* Article, Tumults of Scotland.

with which he had abetted the cause of the Whigs, and promoted the succession of the Protestant line. In 1710, he was made justice general of Scotland.

Although he had long renounced the profession of arms, yet on the rebellion in 1715, he placed himself at the head of a royalist corps, prevented, by his prudent conduct, general Gordon, with 1,000 men, from penetrating into the Western Highlands; and raising levies, joined the duke of Argyle at Stirling, and was wounded at the battle of Dumblain. His military conduct was only a temporary exertion. His principal merit consisted in his parliamentary abilities, which were very considerable. In his study of the law, he had acquired acuteness of apprehension and method of arrangement. His speeches were replete with solid arguments and keen observations; his language was plain and fluent, and his manner grave and solemn. He continued invariably attached to Sir Robert Walpole, during his long administration, and counteracted, as much as lay in his power, the violence of his brother's politics, when he joined opposition. In 1725, he had been nominated keeper of the privy seal; and, in 1734, he was made keeper of the great seal, which office he held till his death.*

Walpole having thus, by timely concession on one hand, and by a due mixture of vigour and moderation on the other, suppressed these alarm-

* For many of these particulars, I am indebted to the obliging communications of lord Frederick Campbell.

ing disturbances in Ireland and Scotland, expressed, in a letter to lord Townshend, his exultation, his sense of the difficulties from which he had been relieved, and his resolution to avoid similar embarrassments. "I think we have once more got Scotland and Ireland quiet, *if we take care to keep them so.*"

CHAPTER 27.

1725.

Dissolution of the Congress of Cambray—Origin and Progress of the Union between the Emperor and Spain—Treaty of Vienna—Affairs of the North—Alarms and Conduct of England—Application to Parliament.

I HAVE already observed, that the quadruple alliance, which was concluded with a view to terminate the disputes between the Emperor and the king of Spain, equally displeased both parties. Accordingly, the Emperor and Philip obstructed the success of the negotiations at the congress of Cambray, where attempts were forming, under the mediation of England and France, to settle the final terms of reconciliation between those two powers.

Besides many other objects in dispute, the Emperor was unwilling to renounce the establishment of the East India company at Ostend, and was still more reluctant to bestow, according to his promise, the investiture of Parma and Tuscany on Don Carlos, from a just apprehension, that the settlement of a Spanish branch of the house of Bourbon in Italy, would endanger the security of his dominions in that country.

Philip no less eagerly insisted on the restitution of Gibraltar, which he declared had been

promised to him, as the price of his accession to the quadruple alliance, and retarded his evacuation of Sicily and Sardinia, until the investitures of Parma and Tuscany should be bestowed on Don Carlos. The consequence of this mutual repugnance to the terms of the quadruple alliance, was a private overture, made by Philip to the Emperor, and the mission of Ripperda to Vienna, for the purpose of adjusting the conditions of their reconciliation. While this secret negotiation was pending, the resentment of Philip and his queen was inflamed by an event which touched their affections and interests in the tenderest point, and justified, in some measure, the violent proceedings which they instantly adopted.

One principal motive which had induced Philip to accede to the quadruple alliance was, the double marriage between his family and the house of Orleans. Don Carlos was affianced to Mademoiselle Beaujolois, the fourth daughter of the duke of Orleans, and the infanta Maria Theresa, daughter of Philip, by Elizabeth Farnese, was betrothed to the king of France. This arrangement was highly advantageous to both the contracting parties; for, as the infanta was only four years of age, her marriage with Louis the Fifteenth, left the chance of an eventual succession to the crown of France still open, to which Philip and his queen, notwithstanding repeated renunciations, looked with anxious expectation; and, should the young king live to consummate the marriage, the infanta of Spain

would become queen of France, and their descendants sit on the throne. The regent was no less gratified by the contemplation of the advantage resulting to himself from the same circumstances. He considered the precarious health of the young king, and the infancy of the bride, as placing at a very remote distance the prospect of a lineal heir; and opposing no obstruction to the hopes he entertained of reigning in his own right, for the security of which, he depended on the promised assistance of England.

During the life of the duke of Orleans, the infanta was treated at Paris as the future queen; but after his death, the duke of Bourbon, in compliance with the general sense of the nation, and in conformity to his own interest, sent back the infanta to Spain, and affianced Louis the Fifteenth to the daughter of Stanislaus, titular king of Poland. This measure, however just or necessary in itself, was conducted with such want of address and circumspection, that it produced an immediate rupture between France and Spain. The abbot de Livry, who was commissioned to open this delicate business, was ordered to deliver to the king of Spain, letters from Louis the Fifteenth and the duke of Bourbon, explaining, in respectful terms, the reasons which induced them to send back the infanta. Livry, instead of fulfilling his orders, was no sooner admitted to an audience, than he threw himself on his knees, kissed the king's hands in an agony of despair, burst into tears,

and thus betrayed his errand before he offered to deliver the letters. The king and queen refused to receive them, turned from him with indignation, and dismissed him from their presence with the greatest marks of ignominy. On receiving a notification from their minister at Paris, that the infanta was to be returned, Livry and the French consul were ordered to quit Madrid in twenty-nine hours, and Philip publicly declared, that Spain could never shed sufficient blood to avenge the insult offered to his family.

On the day which succeeded the issuing of these orders, Philip, in an audience which he gave to the British embassador,* enumerated, in an agony of resentment, all the aggravating circumstances which had accompanied this insupportable indignity offered to his daughter. He made the most bitter complaints at the manner in which it had been carried into execution; and accused the duke of Bourbon of having added duplicity to insult. He had, they both alleged, repeatedly approved the marriage with the infanta, had assured their minister at Paris, that the espousals should be celebrated on the 30th of March; he had made this declaration even after the abbot de Livry was commissioned to notify the resolution of dissolving the marriage; and then, without waiting for their answer, had published the resolution in France. The deceit and fraud of this whole proceeding,

* William Stanhope to the duke of Newcastle, 19th March, 1725. Harrington Papers.

they observed, were so flagrant as must render them contemptible in the eyes of all Europe, and of their own subjects, did they not feel the highest resentment at such enormous ingratitude. After these expressions, Philip announced his determination of separating himself from France for ever; he trusted this resolution would not occasion any decrease in the friendship of the king of England, but rather draw closer the bands of union and amity. He was determined to place his entire friendship and confidence in him alone; and declared that he should order his plenipotentiaries at Cambray to reject the mediation of France, and to submit the final settlement of the points in dispute, between him and the Emperor, to the sole mediation of England.*

This offer being declined by George the First, as injurious to his alliance with France, Philip transferred his resentment to England, broke up the congress of Cambray, and sent immediate orders to baron Ripperda, to conclude the terms of a final reconciliation with the Emperor.

Ripperda found an easy compliance in the Emperor, who had long been dissatisfied with George both as king of England and elector of Hanover; as king, for his strict alliance with France, and his refusal to co-operate in excluding Don Carlos from the succession of Parma and Tuscany; and as elector, for the acquisition of Bremen and Verden, and for refusing to pay the enormous fine demanded for the investiture.

* William Stanhope to the duke of Newcastle, Madrid, March 20, 1725. Walpole and Harrington Papers.

The disputes between Spain and the Emperor, which had so long agitated Europe, and which had been rather heightened than composed by the congress of Cambray, were terminated in a few conferences; the two sovereigns in whose quarrels such a deluge of blood had been shed, and such immense treasures expended, suddenly contracted an alliance for the mutual support of each other's interests, without the knowledge of those very powers who had so long and ineffectually attempted to negotiate an accommodation between them.

This alliance between the Emperor and Spain, concluded at Vienna, consisted of three separate treaties. By the first, signed on the 30th of April, the two sovereigns confirmed the articles of the quadruple alliance. Charles the Sixth renounced his pretensions to the crown of Spain; Philip acknowledged the Emperor's right to Naples and Sicily, the Milanese, and the Netherlands, and guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction, or the succession to the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria, in the female line.

In consequence of this sudden union, the new allies were suspected of forming the most ambitious and dangerous projects. It was not credited that Philip the Fifth would so easily have renounced that just claim, which he might form on the Netherlands, Naples, and Milan, should the Emperor die without issue male, and have guaranteed the whole Austrian succession, in the female line, unless the Emperor, in return, had promised some secret articles in favour of the children of Philip, by Elizabeth Farnese,

who wholly governed the counsels of Spain. Influenced by these considerations, England and France were no less alarmed at the treaty of Vienna, than offended at the insult offered to them as mediating powers, in concluding that alliance without their interposition. These suspicions were soon afterwards strengthened by the indiscreet and violent expressions of Ripperda, as well as by intelligence from the British ministers at Madrid and Paris, and from St. Saphorin, the British agent at Vienna. This was confirmed by the immediate demand of the restitution of Gibraltar, made by Spain, as the sole and indispensable condition of the continuation of peace and commerce with England.

It soon appeared that a second and third treaty had been signed on the first of May. The second was a treaty of commerce; and supported the establishment of the Ostend company, which the maritime powers considered as contrary to the treaty of Westphalia, and as involving in its consequences the diminution of their Indian trade. The third was a treaty of mutual defence. The two sovereigns guarantied their respective territories, and engaged to support each other with all their force, should either be attacked; the king of Spain to supply fifteen men of war, 15,000 infantry, and 5,000 horse, or stipulated subsidies instead; the Emperor to bring into the field 30,000 foot, and 10,000 horse.

But besides these conditions, reports of other articles were circulated and believed; that the

Emperor promised to give in marriage his daughters, the two arch duchesses, to Don Carlos and Don Philip, the two infants of Spain, and to assist in obtaining by force the restitution of Gibraltar, if good offices would not avail. In addition, it was strongly rumoured, and many circumstances induced the ministers to believe, that arrangements were making to place the Pretender upon the throne.

George the First received the notification of the treaty of Vienna, from Count Staremberg, the Imperial ambassador, with an appearance of perfect indifference. In an audience, to which Staremberg was introduced by lord Townshend, he began by observing, that on the proposal of Ripperda, at Vienna, to commence a separate treaty, the Emperor had replied, the congress of Cambray being established for the purpose of settling the disputes between him and the king of Spain, under the mediation of Great Britain and France, he did not see the necessity of altering the train of the negotiation. But when Ripperda insisted that an attempt should be made to compose their differences, the Emperor, reflecting on the difficulties derived from the misunderstanding between Spain and France; and considering that Spain had rejected the mediation of France, and the king of England had declined the sole mediation, conceived, that for the promotion of the public tranquillity, it was his duty to endeavour to form an amicable compromise with the king of Spain. This attempt had been crowned with success, the

treaty was at length signed: he was commanded to communicate a copy of it to the king, and Fonseca, the Imperial minister at Paris, was also commissioned to lay another before the French cabinet. He observed, that the treaty was in all respects conformable to the quadruple alliance, and only regulated those points which remained to be adjusted. He remarked, that as the Emperor had bound himself, by the quadruple alliance, to guaranty the succession to the crowns of England, France, and Spain, Philip had, in conformity to the dictates of reason and justice, consented to guaranty the Pragmatic Sanction. His Imperial majesty, he said, trusted and hoped that the kings of Great Britain and France would also guaranty that order of succession, by acceding to the treaty. With this view, an article was inserted for the admission of those powers, who, with the consent of the contracting parties, should accede within a year; and the article was thus worded, because it was not thought proper to name France, on account of the misunderstanding with Spain. He particularly specified, that although the treaty with Spain was signed, yet the Emperor had ordered his plenipotentiaries not to quit Cambray, until the Spanish ministers had taken their departure. Ripperda, he added, had informed the Emperor, that some points* still remained to be settled between Spain and England; and the king his master requested the Emperor to employ his mediation to that effect. To this request the

* Alluding to Gibraltar.

Emperor had replied, that if those matters related to, and were the consequence of the quadruple alliance, and if the king of England approved it, he would willingly offer his interposition, but otherwise, he would not interfere.

The king, after receiving the copy, congratulated the Emperor and king of Spain on their reconciliation. He then said, that Spain finding it impossible to overcome the impartiality of the mediators, and to induce them to act in contradiction to the quadruple alliance, had deputed Ripperda with a view to form a direct accommodation with the court of Vienna; that his mission taking place before the quarrel arose between France and Spain, it was not to that event, but to the equity and firmness of England and France, that the overtures from Spain were to be attributed; that the hopes of supporting the public tranquillity, and maintaining the faith of treaties, had induced the mediating powers to exert themselves in attempting to bring the congress of Cambray to a happy conclusion, by settling the objects in dispute between the Emperor and Spain, which were in themselves so little interesting to the two crowns. He did not take the least notice of the delicacy which the Emperor affected to show in not being the first to recall his ministers from Cambray, nor of the demand for acceding to the treaty; and concluded by observing, that in regard to the offer made by the Emperor, of interposing his assistance towards adjusting any differences between England and Spain he did

not recollect that any other subsisted, except such as related to commerce, and in those there was no occasion for a mediation.*

To the Spanish ambassador, when he notified the treaty, the king expressed his satisfaction at the peace, because he was thereby delivered from a difficult and burthensome mediation; adding with a smile, "I hope the reconciliation will prove as sincere and durable as the parties expect."†

At the moment when the union of the Emperor and Spain threatened the south of Europe with new disturbances, the tranquillity of the north was in danger of being broken by the daring enterprises of Russia, who seemed to employ, with great effect, the new ascendancy which she had gained as an European power. When Peter the Great had been counteracted in his attempts against Denmark, by the vigorous interposition of England, he turned his views to Sweden, at that time distracted with the troubles derived from a disputed succession, declining under the weak administration of a sovereign almost reduced to a cypher by the new constitution, and enfeebled by factions, natural to a government founded on popular principles, and fomented by a turbulent aristocracy. But he was prevented from taking an active share in the disturbances of Sweden by the Persian war, which carried him from the Baltic to the Caspian

* Lord Townshend to St. Saphorin, May 3-14, 1725. Walpole Papers.

† Walpole Papers.

sea. At the conclusion of the campaign, he again turned his thoughts to Denmark and Sweden. By gaining the senate, he concluded, in opposition to the king, a defensive alliance with Sweden for twelve years. The aim of this alliance was levelled against Denmark; and by a secret article it was stipulated, that the contracting powers should employ their good offices to obtain the restitution of Sleswic to the duke of Holstein, and if these did not succeed, should have recourse to other measures. He also refused to listen to the overtures of reconciliation with George the First, offered through the mediation of France and Sweden, unless the king would bind himself to insist on the restitution of Sleswic. The treaty was scarcely signed, when Peter died; but his wife and successor Catherine, adopted all the views of her deceased husband, promoted the cause of her son-in law with still greater warmth, and made vigorous exertions for the purpose of forcing Denmark to accede to her demands. Thus a new war seemed inevitable, and preparations were made on all sides against an approaching rupture.

Every attempt of France and England to reconcile these jarring interests, failed of success. Catherine insisted on the restitution of Sleswic, or an equivalent (which alluded to Bremen and Verden) as the indispensable condition of her accommodation with Denmark. In vain the senate exhorted her to try the way of negotiation, and earnestly besought her, "for the ease and relief of her subjects, to countermand the charge-

able equipments she had been pleased to order in favour of the duke's pretensions on Sleswic." In answer to these exhortations, the Empress warmly replied, "Let not any one of you all, that would be reckoned an honest subject, or hope to enjoy the least share of my favour, dare to offer me such mean spirited advice. The duke of Holstein, stripped unjustly of his hereditary dominions, took sanctuary in our country, and threw himself into the arms of my deceased lord for protection. He is since contracted to my daughter, and is himself as dear to me as my own child. I am bound by all the rules of honour, as well as the ties of blood, to see justice done to that unfortunate prince, in whose cause I would not scruple to forego the weakness of my sex, and even to draw a sword, or to put myself at the head of an army. I could content myself with clothes to keep me warm, and with bread to eat; but I will have you know that my children ought to be, and shall be treated as the offspring of my dear lord, and your sovereign deceased. Whoever of you will aid me in this just cause of my son-in-law, shall be encouraged and rewarded; but whoever dares oppose it, shall feel the utmost weight of my displeasure. If the kings of France and Great Britain are really disposed to help the duke of Holstein in recovering his right, this equipment will facilitate their operations, by intimidating the king of Denmark, and putting him to a constant expense. I know that prince will not be able to rest in his bed, nor to keep a single ship in his

harbours unequipped, as long as he sees that the fleet and gallies of Russia, with 50,000 men on board, can in a fortnight's time visit him in the very port of Copenhagen. But let France and Britain refuse their assistance to the duke; while I have Sweden and Prussia on my side, I hope he is in no danger of wanting subsistence. In short, it is for my interest and glory, as well as your's, to convince the world, that I have power to see justice done to my family, and am resolved to make use of it; and I know no such way of convincing them of this truth, as by letting them see the effects of it with their own eyes."

At the conclusion of these words, she gave orders in their presence, to Menchikof and Apraxin, to have the fleet and troops in readiness by the middle of May at their peril.*

In consequence of these resolutions, Spain and the Emperor made overtures to Catherine, which were cordially received. Large sums of money were remitted from Madrid to Petersburg, and plans of offensive operation were concerted between them. It was reported that the fleet and troops of Russia were preparing to act, not only against Denmark, but to join Spain and the Emperor in favour of the Pretender. But none of these transactions had any effect in disturbing the public tranquillity, or exciting the attention of parliament.

As the embarrassed situation of foreign affairs, and the prospect of an approaching rupture with

* Stephen Poyntz to lord Townshend, Stockholm, May 14, 1725. Walpole Papers.

the Emperor, Spain, and Russia, might render it highly necessary to expend large sums in secret service; as there was no sum appropriated to such emergencies, and as the revenues of the civil list, loaded as they were with a large debt, were incapable of affording a competent supply, the minister was again laid under the necessity of applying to parliament.

On the 8th of April, a message from the king was delivered to the house, importing that he had been engaged in some extraordinary expenses, which he was persuaded his loyal commons would believe to have been employed, not only for the honour and dignity of the crown, but also for the interest and prosperity of his people. The report of the treasury stated the debt at £.508,363. In the debate it was asserted that since the civil list was settled, an expense of above £.90,000 a year had been incurred, which could not be foreseen, and consequently not provided for. Parliamentary relief having been given in a similar case three years before, just and abundant matter was suggested for parliamentary debates and popular complaints. Pulteney was particularly urgent, and commenced on this occasion his public opposition. A compliance with the message however was carried by a large majority.*

* For its being taken into consideration by a committee of the whole house on the 9th, 239 against 119; and for passing the bill on the 16th, by 211 against 99. Journals.

CHAPTER 28.

1725.

Conclusion and Object of the Treaty of Hanover—Objections of Walpole—Removed—Observations on the secret Articles in the Treaty of Vienna.

SUCH was the situation of affairs in the north and south, when the king arrived at Hanover, on the 25th of June. The whole political horizon was thickly covered with clouds, which seemed to announce a future tempest. To disperse these clouds, and to bring back serenity, seemed almost beyond the power of human prudence.

Hanover, as the Hague in time of William, now became the great centre of intrigue and negotiation, and the cabinet of a British sovereign in the heart of Germany, pacified or convulsed Europe. The great object of Townshend's negotiations was, to add vigour to the co-operation of France, to gain Prussia, to detach Sweden from Russia, and to form with France, and by her concurrence in the north, a counter treaty to that of Vienna, which might awe the Emperor and Spain, and prevent the princes and circles of the German empire, from acceding to an alliance, which solely regarded the house of Austria, and was unconnected with the interests of Germany. All these points, were effected

with consummate address. Horace Walpole obtained at Paris the concurrence of France, however averse to adopt vigorous measures. Townshend, in a conference at Herenhausen, lured Frederick William, by an offer of guarantying his succession to Berg and Juliers, and detached him from Russia and Austria. Poyntz, aided by French and English money, supported the cause of the king of Sweden, depressed the Russian party, and acquired a majority in the senate, favourable to the English interest.

In the midst of these auspicious circumstances, a defensive alliance between England, France, and Prussia, was signed on the 3rd of September at Hanover, from which it is usually denominated the treaty of Hanover. By the third article, the contracting parties mutually stipulated to furnish, in case of an attack, two months after requisition, England and France respectively 8,000 foot and 4,000 horse, and Prussia 3,000 foot and 2,000 horse, or the value in ships or money. If these quotas were not sufficient, they were to agree concerning farther succours; and, in case of necessity, to assist the party attacked with all their forces.

The treaty of Hanover, like most defensive alliances, had two meanings. The ostensible purport was to guaranty each other's dominions, and the treaties of Westphalia and Oliva. The real purport was, to form a strong alliance in opposition to the designs of the Emperor, Spain, and Russia, and, under the general tenor of guarantying the privileges of commerce in par-

ticular, which the contracting parties actually enjoyed, or ought to enjoy, as well in as out of Europe, to compel the Emperor to relinquish his favourite project of the Ostend company, which was considered by England and Holland as contrary to the treaty of Westphalia; and to counteract the attempts which the Emperor, Spain, and Russia were accused of carrying on in favour of the Pretender.

A copy of the treaty being immediately transmitted by lord Townshend to the duke of Newcastle, was first communicated confidentially to Sir Robert Walpole; and by his advice laid before a select meeting of those members of the regency* who were most entrusted with the secrets of the cabinet. The result † of the conference was, an unanimous approbation of the contents, and a resolution to support the engagements contracted by this alliance. The lords justices, in like manner, gave their consent; and immediate negotiations were set on foot to obtain the accession of the United Provinces, Sweden, and Denmark; and several of the German princes and states, which was afterwards effected.

The resentment entertained at Hanover against the Emperor, is sufficiently proved by a visionary

* The lord chancellor King, the earl of Berkley, first lord of the admiralty, and earl Godolphin, who was mentioned by the duke of Newcastle as the only person, in the absence of the duke of Devonshire, to whom it was thought proper to entrust a matter of so great secrecy and importance.

† Duke of Newcastle to lord Townshend, September $\frac{12}{23}$, 1725. Correspondence.

scheme, which the sanguine disposition of Townshend had conceived for the conquest and partition of the Austrian Netherlands, and which he fully enters into and justifies, in a confidential letter to Horace Walpole.* He was moreover so fully assured of its success, that at one time he proposed to divide the conquered provinces between England, France, and Holland; and at another, to transfer them to the elector of Bavaria.† It is most probable that this wild scheme, the impracticability of which was proved by Horace Walpole in his reply,‡ was never communicated to Walpole; but if communicated, we may be convinced that it met with no encouragement from a minister, whose great principle it was to avoid, as much as possible, all foreign entanglements, and not to enter into any war which was not connected with the security of England.

Townshend announced, with great triumph, the success which attended his complicated negotiations, by the conclusion of the treaty of Hanover. In a dispatch to Horace Walpole, dated September 3, 1725, he observes, "I must now congratulate with you on our having so successfully begun a work, which, if cultivated and improved, as it may be, will check the ambitious views of the court of Vienna, and secure

* Lord Townshend to Horace Walpole, Hanover, August 27, 1725. Walpole Papers.

† Lord Townshend to W. Finch, $\frac{1}{12}$ November 1725. Walpole Papers.

‡ September 4, 1725. Walpole Papers.

the tranquillity of Europe; and in order to obtain that great end, no time ought to be lost to engage other powers to accede to this treaty."

It has been usually asserted, and echoed from one publication to another, that during the reigns of the two first sovereigns of the house of Brunswic, the helm of government was uniformly steered by the Hanöverian rudder, and the interests of Great Britain *wholly* sacrificed to the interests of the king's dominions in Germany. But no transaction has been more vehemently arraigned as a dereliction of national honour, than this treaty, upon which lord Chesterfield has said, "that Hanover rode triumphant on the shoulders of England;"* and lord Chatham, in his energetic language, observed, "it is a treaty, the tendency of which is discovered in the name; a treaty by which we disunited ourselves from Austria, destroyed that building which we now may perhaps endeavour without success to raise again, and weakened the only power which it was our interest to strengthen." It may, perhaps, seem presumptuous to affirm, in opposition to these respectable opinions, that there was no event since the accession of the house of Brunswic, in which the interests of Hanover were more sacrificed to those of England, than in this very treaty, which then raised such an outcry against the Walpole administration, and which still affords a theme for political obloquy.

* Further Vindication of the case of the Hanover Treaty.

In the first place, it may be observed, that if in this treaty the interests of England were wholly sacrificed to those of Hanover, evident proofs of that fact would be traced from the conduct of the king and his German ministers. We should find them uniformly promoting that alliance, uniformly concurring in vigorous measures against the house of Austria; but the contrary is the fact. The king himself opposed the Hanover treaty, and objected to all vigorous proceedings against the Emperor, from a dread of being put under the ban of the empire,* and from a tender concern for his electorate, which was threatened with an immediate invasion. Nor was he induced to sanction the measures of the British cabinet, until he was persuaded that, even should a rupture with the Emperor ensue, his German dominions would not be exposed to an attack, because it would only be a naval war, and hostilities would be principally confined to the West Indies;† and that in all events, supported by the united arms of France and England, he would have no cause of apprehension. ‡

The treaty was highly displeasing to the German ministers, who, alarmed at the repeated menaces of the Imperial court, loudly exclaimed, that the king was exposing his Hanoverian dominions to the vengeance of the head of the

* Intercepted Letters. Correspondence, Period III.

† Palm to the Emperor, December 17th, 1726.

‡ Townshend's Dispatches to Horace Walpole, November 1725, and August 1726.

empire, for the sake only of a few branches of English trade. They accordingly renewed their efforts against Townshend and Walpole, leagued with opposition, and caballed with those foreign powers who were inimical to the English cabinet.

We now find the Emperor, with whom the Hanoverians are said to have been constantly at variance, during the whole reign of George the First, courting that very party; we see his confidential ministers expressing hopes of their assistance to *counteract* the *hostile* intentions of the *English* cabinet; lamenting, in most pathetic terms, the overthrow of that influence, which is held forth as unfavourable to the Imperial interest, and caballing with Bothmar, and Fabricius the king's chamberlain. We also trace the empress of Germany corresponding with the duchess of Kendal, for the purpose of infusing pacific sentiments into the king.

Another motive, which had certainly no connection with Hanoverian politics, and was solely derived from a due consideration of England alone, is thus detailed in the report of the treaty of Vienna: "The Emperor has long been desirous to have a naval force, and though his endeavours in Italy have hitherto proved fruitless, because nothing can produce navigation but trade; yet should the Ostend company go on with success, by the natural course of things, the Emperor will in time have a naval force on the coast of Flanders, which may prove much more inconvenient to us hereafter, than a fleet

in the Mediterranean or Adriatic seas; and there are many reasons why we should be extremely jealous of the increase of shipping in the hands of a popish prince. The command of the seas has frequently past from one nation to another; and though Great Britain has continued longer in possession of the superiority than perhaps any other nation ever did, yet all human affairs are subject to great vicissitudes. We have seen one considerable maritime power established in the north, in our memory; Spain likewise was in a fair way to make a figure at sea not long ago, and perhaps may do so still; but the protestant interest at sea is declining. The Dane and the Swede are no longer considerable in the Baltic, and there is reason to apprehend, that the Dutch naval force is not at present upon a very good foot."*

Thus then, I have endeavoured to show that this treaty was not directed by the interests of Hanover, but diametrically opposed them; that it was wholly an English treaty in every thing, but the name; and that the motive which gave rise to it was, the protection and preservation of British commerce, British possessions, and British government. Its determinate objects were, the preservation of Gibraltar, the abolition of the Ostend company, and, if credit may be given to the supposed secret articles in the treaty of Vienna, the frustration of the plan for restoring the Pretender.

In thus attempting to explain the motives

* Report concerning the Treaty of Vienna. Orford Papers.

which led to the formation of the treaty of Hanover, I am not justifying Sir Robert Walpole; for he never entirely approved that alliance; he always thought that the king and Townshend were too much alarmed with exaggerated rumours and apprehensions of distant evils; he was of opinion, that milder measures might have been pursued with greater probability of success. He strongly objected to one part of their proceedings; that while they were anxious to gain allies on the side of Germany, they neglected to secure Portugal, the advantages of whose friendship, in case of a rupture with Spain, were incalculably great; and he did not hesitate to deliver his opinion, however contrary to the sentiments of the king, and his brother-in-law, with that frankness to which he was always accustomed. He remonstrated, in the strongest manner, against the large sums of money required for gaining Sweden; and when lord Townshend, in the name of the king, demanded £.100,000 for that purpose, he ventured to declare that it was so large a demand, as could not be legally supplied by any other method than from the civil list; that £.50,000 was as much as that could furnish, without the greatest difficulties, and trusted that no more would be drawn for. He thought Townshend too precipitate in concluding the treaty; hinted his doubts whether the empress of Russia had any serious intention to invade England; and strongly opposed searching or laying an embargo on the Russian ships, which Townshend

suspected were employed in conveying arms and ammunition to the disaffected in Scotland or Ireland.

He was also dissatisfied with lord Townshend, for having concealed the negotiation which terminated in the treaty of Hanover, until it was entirely concluded. He doubted the sincerity of France, and suspected (what really happened) that she would evade paying her share of the subsidies, and that therefore the principal burthen of the expense would fall on England. He was averse to enter upon measures which might tend to diminish the force of the house of Austria, which he had always considered as the natural ally of England, and the bulwark against the ambitious designs of France, whenever an union with Spain should be re-established, and the French finances be recovered from the exhausted state to which they had been reduced by the war of the Spanish succession, and the fatal effects of the Mississippi scheme.

He declared, in the most positive terms, that if a war was to be undertaken, which he most heartily deprecated, it was absolutely necessary to convince the nation, that an invasion by a foreign power, or an evident design of an invasion, the support of the Pretender, and the cause of the Protestant succession, were the principal motives that compelled the king to part with that peace and tranquillity which had been attended with such lasting and happy effects. But from the moment that there appeared to

him any danger of an invasion in favour of the Pretender, however remote and distant, he caught the alarm. He became not less anxious than his brother minister to adopt measures of defence, and to prepare for hostilities; yet he continued so true to his system, that, during the complicated negotiations which followed the treaty of Hanover, he inveighed against precipitate measures, and invariably recommended caution and forbearance. He was, in fact, so very anxious to prevent a rupture with the Emperor, that he availed himself of the pacific sentiments of the duchess of Kendal,* to counteract, by her influence over the king, the more violent and hostile resolutions of Townshend, who supported the necessity of vigorous measures.

It was observed by the late earl of Hardwicke,† that the merits of the treaty of Hanover entirely rest on the still undetermined points, whether the courts of Vienna and Madrid intended only to compose their own quarrels, or also to take Gibraltar, and to impose the Pretender on England. As these yet undecided points still exercise the sagacity, and give full scope to the conjectures of native and foreign historians, I shall here observe, that the papers and documents submitted to my inspection, fully display the facts which prove the reality of the secret articles, and which produced the public declarations of the king and ministers in parliament, that the Emperor and king of Spain proposed to attempt

* Correspondence. † Hardwicke Papers.

the recovery of Gibraltar, and the restoration of the Pretender. From a candid review and comparison of these accounts, we may draw this inference; the king of Spain, urged by resentment, ambition, and interest, was serious in his resolution to extort the cession of Gibraltar and Minorca, at all events; was prepared to employ his whole force against England to restore the Pretender; and fully depended on the cooperation of the Emperor, to whom he sent, in fourteen months, 1,340,000 pistoles; and would have remitted more, had the galleons arrived. To these facts, may be added the frequent conferences of Ormond and Liria, son of the duke of Berwick, with the Spanish, Imperial, and Russian ministers; the plan of an invasion by Liria; the assembling of troops on the coast of Gallicia; the engagement of officers for the Pretender's service; the redemption of the stands of arms which the Pretender had pawned at Cadiz; the distinguished reception of the duke of Wharton, as agent of the Pretender, with the ensigns of the garter, by him recently conferred; and his mission to Vienna for the purpose of concerting a plan of operation. At this crisis, the British embassador was treated with slight and indignity; he was, to use his own expression, avoided by the grandees like a pestilence. The Jacobite air, "The king shall enjoy his own again," was insultingly played at court, and the duke of Liria did not scruple to declare, that he hoped it would soon be a crime

in Spain to mention George the First as king of England.*

But a distinction has been made between the king of Spain and the Emperor, on whose behalf it has been asserted, that some reports were afterwards found to have been exaggerated, and some imputed projects never intended to be carried into execution. The Emperor himself positively denied that he had ever entertained serious designs of assisting the Pretender, and declared that he had only lured the queen of Spain with the hopes of giving his daughters in marriage to her two sons, which he never meant to realize. Yet at the time there were strong reasons to believe that he encouraged the Pretender and his agents.

The great object of the Emperor was, to establish the Ostend company, and obtain the guaranty of the Pragmatic Sanction, which England and France declined, and with that view, to force George the First to a compliance, by affecting to co-operate with Spain in favour of the Pretender, and by threatening an invasion of the electorate of Hanover. Yet sufficient appearances seemed to justify the apprehensions of the king, and to induce him to believe that the Emperor was sincere in his designs of joining Spain with all his forces, and would only be deterred by a counter-alliance. Ripperda said publicly, that by this close union of Spain and

* Mr. Stanhope's Dispatches from Spain, 1725. Harrington and Walpole Papers. See Correspondence, Article Ripperda.

Austria, the two sovereigns would avenge the insults they had received; and the partisans of the Emperor boasted, that as he was no longer alarmed for Italy, no power in the empire could venture to oppose the dictates of their master in matters of religion or otherwise.* The Austrian minister publicly boasted, that the Emperor would give laws to Europe; that he would now possess the sole and entire direction of the court of Spain, and that in future the king must be obliged to him for the continuance of the harmony between England and Spain, and for the security of the commercial advantages stipulated with that crown.† Count Sinzendorf also said to Petkum, "Let the king take care of himself, for we know that the people of England are beginning to be tired of him." The Emperor was weak enough to make an unconstitutional distinction between the king and parliament, and boasted to count Oropessa, that by offering to the parliament the exclusive commerce to Spain and the Indies, he should not only obtain the restitution of Gibraltar, but seduce England from France. "My ministers," he added, "are unanimous; I am desirous to favour the people and commerce of England; but Gibraltar and Minorca must first be restored."‡ As the Emperor was at this time known to govern the court of Madrid, and the strictest union appeared to be maintained be-

* St. Saphorin to lord Townshend, Vienna, 11th May 1725.
† Duke of Newcastle to Mr. Stanhope, May 4th, 1725, O. S.
‡ St. Saphorin to lord Townshend, Vienna, May 30th, 1725.

tween them, it was not possible for ministers to distinguish between his professions and intentions; nor does a subsequent avowal of duplicity on his part, inculpate those who, acting under the impulse of opinions so well founded, formed that treaty which deterred the king of Spain and his allies from exerting themselves in the execution of those projects, which, if once accompanied with success, might have been pursued to an extent not originally intended by the Emperor. Such were the grounds of alarm which induced Walpole, though not to approve the proceedings in all respects, yet to justify and to support the treaty in parliament.

CHAPTER 29.

1725—1727.

The King's dangerous Passage to England—Pulteney enters into Opposition—The Treaty of Hanover approved by Parliament, and vigorous Measures adopted—Public Indignation against the Emperor—Walpole's pacific Views—Preliminaries agreed to by the Emperor—and Spain—The King departs for Hanover.

THE presence of the king being now necessary in England, for the purpose of laying the treaty before parliament, he quitted Hanover on the 29th of December, after a short stay in Holland, embarked at Helvoetsluys, on the 1st of January, O. S. 1726, at one in the afternoon; and after a violent storm, which continued three days, during which he was exposed to imminent danger, he landed on the 3d at Rye. To the king's escape, the author of the Night Thoughts alludes, in his seventh Satire, which concludes with a high eulogium on Sir Robert Walpole:

> While sea and air, great Brunswick! shook our state,
> And sported with our king's and kingdom's fate,
> Depriv'd of what she lov'd, and press'd by fear
> Of ever losing what she held most dear;
> How did Britannia, like Achilles weep,
> And tell her sorrows to the kindred deep!
> Hang o'er the floods, and, in devotion warm,
> Strive, for thee, with the surge, and fight the storm!
> What felt thy Walpole, pilot of the realm!
> Our Palinurus slept not at the helm.

His eyes ne'er closed, long since enured to wake,
And outwatch every star for Brunswick's sake:
By thwarting passions tost, by cares opprest,
He found the tempest pictur'd in his breast.
But *now*, what joys that gloom of heart dispel,
No powers of language—but his *own* can tell;
His own, which *nature* and the *graces* form,
At will to raise or hush the *civil* storm.

The speech from the throne, which was delivered Jan. 20, was penned with great address, and well calculated to produce an impressive effect. It stated, that the distressed condition of the protestants abroad, the engagements contracted by certain powers, which seemed to lay the foundation of new disturbances in Europe, and threaten his subjects with the loss of their most advantageous trade, had obliged the king to conclude a defensive alliance with France and Prussia, and invite the States General and other powers to accede, with a view to secure their rights and privileges, and preserve the peace and balance of Europe. It adverted to the machinations of the disaffected party in favour of the Pretender; and after urging the necessity of placing the kingdom in a posture of defence, concluded in the true spirit of the preventive and pacific system adopted by the minister; "When the world shall see, that you will not suffer the British crown and nation to be menaced and insulted, those, who most envy the present happiness and tranquillity of this kingdom, and are endeavouring to make us subservient to their ambition, will consider their own interest and circumstances, before they

make any attempt upon so brave a people, strengthened and supported by prudent and powerful alliances; and, though desirous to preserve the peace, able and ready to defend themselves against the efforts of all aggressors. Such resolutions, and such measures, timely taken, I am satisfied are the most effectual means of preventing a war, and continuing to us the blessings of peace and prosperity."*

Addresses, in conformity with the speech, were presented by both houses, promising to support the king against all attempts to disturb the public repose: and the commons immediately proceeded to consider of a supply. On the proposal for continuing the same number of men as were maintained in the last year, a motion of Shippen, made Jan. 28, to reduce the 4,000 men, was negatived without a division, and the original question carried. Another being made, Feb. 9, by Pulteney, for a committee to state the public debts, from 1714 to 1725, Walpole objected to it as unseasonable and preposterous, and calculated to give a dangerous wound to public credit, when the monied men were too much alarmed with the appearances of an approaching war. He urged, that in the present posture of affairs, the commons could not better express their love to their country, than by fulfilling their promises, and raising the necessary supplies, for the purpose of enabling the king to make good his late engagements, disappointing the hopes of the disaffected, and resenting

* Journals. Chandler. Tindal.

any insults which might be offered to his crown and dignity. Barnard, member for London, having confirmed the statement of the minister, and observed that stocks had already fallen 12 or 14 per cent.; his remarks made a deep impression on the house; and the motion was negatived by 262 against 89.

The treaty of Hanover was presented to the house of commons by Sir Robert Walpole, Feb. 16th, but he did not take any active part on that occasion. The business of the day was principally supported by his brother Horace Walpole, who opened the debate with a very able speech, in which he detailed the state of affairs in Europe, from the peace of Utrecht to that time; dwelt on the dangerous consequences which might result from the union of Spain and the Emperor, and endeavoured to prove the necessity of the treaty formed at Hanover, between England, France, and Prussia, as the only method of counteracting the ambitious designs of those two sovereigns, preserving the tranquillity of Europe, restoring the balance of power, and securing the commerce of England.

The opposition, with great art, condemned the treaty, as being made solely with a view to Hanover, and as likely to engage the nation in a war for the defence of the king's dominions in Germany, contrary to the article in the act for limiting the crown in the Protestant line, which being the basis of the act of settlement, was become part of the constitution, and therefore ought to be held sacred and inviolable.

The objection was well answered by Henry Pelham; "The true meaning and intent of that limitation, was not wholly and for ever to deprive his majesty's foreign dominions of any assistance from this nation; for if so, the king in that respect would be in a worse condition upon his accession to the British throne, than he was before; but only to restrain the sovereign for the future, from engaging the nation, at his pleasure, in a war for the defence of any dominions not belonging to the crown of England, without the consent of parliament, to whom the legislature wisely left to judge and determine, whether such a war was just and necessary or no? For his own part, he was fully of opinion, that if in the present juncture, the king's foreign dominions should be attacked or insulted, this nation ought to support him against all his enemies."*

The only share Walpole took in this debate, was in reply to Pulteney, who suggested that the backwardness of the Emperor in granting the investiture of Bremen and Verden, might have been one motive for the late measure. He observed, "the king might long ago have received the investiture, if he would have consented to pay the exorbitant fees demanded on that occasion." An address, moved by Pelham, was carried in the affirmative, by 285 against 107; and the same triumphant majority voted an extraordinary supply, an increase of seamen,

* Chandler, vol. 6. p. 362.

and testified their hearty concurrence to support government in the most vigorous measures.

This session, in which scarcely any opposition was made to the measures of government, was closed on the 24th of May by prorogation; when the king, after returning his hearty thanks for their attention and zeal, and extolling their spirit and resolution, concluded; "The constant employment of my thoughts, and the most earnest wishes of my heart, tend wholly to secure to my subjects their just rights and advantages, and to preserve to them and to all Europe, the enjoyment of a safe and honourable peace: and I must not conclude without giving you the strongest assurances, that the particular confidence you have placed in me, shall be made use of in such a manner only, as may most effectually conduce to the attaining those good and great purposes."*

In consequence of this effusion of parliamentary zeal, the most active preparations for commencing or preventing hostilities were made, in concert with France. The first efforts were directed to the North, as to the point which appeared most dangerous and alarming. For it required no great penetration to foresee, that if Russia could either bribe or awe Sweden into compliance, Denmark would not be able to resist the combination of these two powers. A Russian squadron riding in the port of Gotheburg, in conjunction with the Swedish fleet,

* Journals. Chandler. Tindal.

would keep Great Britain in continual alarms, by threatening her with an immediate invasion, and be ready to co-operate with the Emperor and Spain. The golden showers poured into Sweden from France and England, overcame the Holstein and Russian party; and Sweden prepared, on the first appearance of the English squadron, to renounce the alliance with Russia, and receive the Hanoverian allies with open arms. The squadron sent to the Baltic, under the command of Sir Charles Wager, effected the purposes for which it was equipped. It inspired Denmark with confidence; enabled Sweden to recede from the alliance with Russia, and to accede to the treaty of Hanover; it compelled the empress Catherine to renounce her hostile attempts in favour of the duke of Holstein; and though she afterwards concluded a formal alliance with the Emperor, yet it was not attended with any material effects. Threatened with an attack from the united arms of France, England, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, who had acceded to the treaty of Hanover, and finding herself not likely to receive any effectual assistance from her ally the Emperor, who, though he had seduced Prussia from the Hanover allies, had been foiled in his attempts to gain the princes and circles of the empire; her impotent resentment subsided at the near approach of danger, and her fleet quietly remained in her ports, without venturing to oppose the British squadron.

These vigorous measures in the North, which

detached Sweden from Russia, and prevented all concert between the Emperor and Catherine, effected the most difficult part of the business, and were a prelude to the successful issue of the exertions against Spain and the Emperor. The haughty and restless ambition of Spain had roused the spirit of the British nation, but strong prejudices in favour of the house of Austria still prevailed in England. The Emperor had many partisans, and even Walpole was inclined not to push matters vigorously against him; but the imprudence of the Emperor destroyed these favourable impressions.

This year gave birth to two events of great importance, which occurred nearly at the same period, the fall of Ripperda, and the disgrace of the duke of Bourbon. The fall of Ripperda, of which a full account is given in a subsequent chapter, was unfavourable to the interests of England. On his disgrace, he took refuge in the house of the British embassador, where he was arrested by command of the king of Spain. Stanhope complained of the violation of the law of nations, and was warmly supported by the foreign ministers. The Spanish cabinet tendered excuses; memorials and counter memorials passed between the two courts; the misunderstanding was increased, and Philip made vast preparations by sea and land, which were evidently designed for the siege of Gibraltar.*

The disgrace of the duke of Bourbon, which occurred in June, was received at the courts of

* Stanhope's Dispatches.

Madrid and Vienna with the highest transports of joy, as a sure prelude to the separation of France from England, and reconciliation with Spain. The elevation of Fleury was hailed by the Jacobites, as the beginning of a new æra, and the certain forerunner of a successful attempt to place the Pretender on the throne, by the united arms of France, Spain, and Austria. But the address of Horace Walpole, who had secured the confidence of the new minister, prevailed on him to maintain the union, and ratify the engagements specified in the treaty of Hanover. While the opposition in England industriously circulated reports, that the cabinet was duped by Fleury, the French party hostile to his measures, and the queen of Spain, declared that Fleury was a coward, and wholly governed by that heretic Horace Walpole.*

The parliament assembled the 17th of January 1727, and the king in his speech from the throne observed; he had received information from different parts, on which he could entirely depend, that the placing of the Pretender upon the throne of this kingdom was one of the articles of the secret engagements; and if time should evince, that, to give up the trade of this nation to one power, and Gibraltar and Port Mahon to another, is made the price and reward of imposing upon this kingdom a Popish Pretender, what indignation must this raise in the breast of every protestant Briton!† This whole speech

* Horace Walpole's Apology. Walpole Papers.

† Tindal, vol. 19. p. 562. Journals.

is singularly full and explicit, and in length exceeds all others, which, since the revolution, had been delivered from the throne. The conclusion is peculiarly animated and impressive: "If preserving a due balance of power in Europe; if defending the possessions of the crown of Great Britain, of infinite advantage and security to our trade and commerce; if supporting that trade and commerce against dangerous and unlawful encroachments; and if the present establishment, the religion, liberties, and properties of a protestant people, are any longer considerations worthy of the care and attention of a British parliament; I need say no more to incite my loyal and faithful houses of parliament, to exert themselves in the defence of all that is dear and valuable to them."

The zeal and indignation raised by this speech were so great, that the address of thanks was carried by a majority of 251 against 81; and the commons proved, that the warm terms in which they conveyed their approbation of the measures which had been pursued, were not confined to mere form. Twenty thousand seamen were unanimously voted; the army was augmented to 26,000 men, and the supplies demanded for the service of the current year, were voted without the least opposition. The public indignation, excited by the peremptory demand of the restitution of Gibraltar, and the secret articles in the treaty of Vienna, which, according to the positive declarations of the king and his ministers, related to the Pretender, was still farther increased

by the imprudent conduct of Palm, the Imperial minister at London. Caballing with the Hanoverian ministers, and confiding in the councils of opposition, he advised the Emperor, in a letter which fell into the hands of the ministers, to make a public declaration, that the assertions contained in the speech were false.*

Guided by this imprudent advice, the Emperor, who was wholly unacquainted with the principles of the English constitution, ordered Palm to present a memorial to the king. In this memorial, the Imperial minister, after reflecting on the speech, and after solemnly denying, in his master's name, the existence of any secret articles, concluded in these words: "Which things being thus, the injury offered to truth, the honour and dignity of his sacred Imperial and Catholic majesty require, that they should be exposed to your majesty, to the kingdom of Great Britain, and to the whole world: and his sacred Imperial majesty demands that reparation which is due to him by all manner of right, for the great injuries which have been done him by these many imputations." †

This memorial was printed and circulated, and was accompanied with a letter from the Imperial chancellor, count Zinzendorff, enjoining Palm to publish it, that the whole nation might be acquainted with the facts.‡ The intemperate language used in these papers, and the indiscretion of distinguishing between the king

* Correspondence. † Tindal, vol. 19. p. 576.
‡ Hist. Register.

and his subjects, and of appealing from the throne to the nation, excited the just resentment of parliament. The memorial being submitted to the house of commons, March 13, not only those who supported government, but even Pulteney, Sir William Wyndham, Shippen, and the leading members in opposition, agreed in expressing the highest indignation at this affront offered to the crown, and strongly reprobated the audacity of the Imperial minister. The whole house unanimously adopted the address drawn up by Walpole, "To express the highest resentment at the affront and indignity offered to his most sacred majesty, by the memorial delivered by the Emperor's resident, and at his insolence in printing and dispersing the same throughout the kingdom; to declare their utmost abhorrence of this audacious manner of appealing to the people against his majesty, and their detestation of the presumptuous and vain attempt of endeavouring to instil into the minds of any of his majesty's faithful subjects, the least distrust or diffidence in his most sacred royal word; to return his majesty the thanks of this house, for his care and vigilance, in discovering the secret and pernicious designs of his enemies, and his goodness in communicating to his parliament the dangers that threatened this kingdom; and to assure his majesty, that the house would stand by and support him against all open and secret enemies, both at home and abroad, and effectually defeat the expectations of all such as may have in any manner countenanced, en-

couraged, or abetted the disturbers of the public tranquillity in this extravagant insult upon his majesty, or flattered them with hopes, that an obstinate perseverance in their destructive measures, could stagger the firmness of the British nation, in vindication of his majesty's honour, and the defence of their rights and privileges."*

Soon after the presentation of this address, Palm was commanded to leave the kingdom; the British resident at Vienna quitted the Imperial dominions; and as the Spanish minister had previously taken an abrupt departure, a rupture with Spain and the Emperor appeared to be unavoidable. The most active preparations were made on all sides; Spain commenced hostilities by the siege of Gibraltar, and expected to be seconded by the whole force of the house of Austria. A bloody war would have been the consequence of this attack, had the Emperor fulfilled the treaty of Vienna; or had England and France instantly directed their whole force against the restless and ambitious court of Madrid. Fortunately, the pacific sentiments of Walpole and Fleury began to operate on the affairs of Europe, and the government of England exhibited a striking instance of vigour and moderation; of vigour in the preparations for war, and of moderation in suspending the blow, at the very moment in which it was ready to strike with effect.

Walpole dreaded the interruption of our commerce with Spain, which formed the most ex-

* Journals. Chandler.

tensive branch of the national trade, and with that view strained every nerve to infuse sentiments of reconciliation into the British cabinet. Hence the instructions of admiral Hosier,* who had been sent on an expedition to the Spanish West Indies, enjoined him in the strongest manner not to commit hostilities; hence England also declined the offer of France to consider the attack of Gibraltar as a *casus fœderis*, from an apprehension lest the warlike interposition of France should contribute to the diffusion of hostilities; hence notwithstanding the insult offered to the king and nation by the Emperor, overtures of accommodation were gladly received through the mediation of France.

When the Emperor so grossly insulted the king and the nation by the memorial of Palm, he conceived the most sanguine expectations of having formed a confederacy strong enough to oppose the allies of Hanover. He had seduced the king of Prussia from the treaty of Hanover; he had already gained the electors of Mentz, Treves, Cologne, and Palatine; secured the neutrality of the Saxons, and even prevailed on the duke of Brunswic Wolfenbuttle, to admit an Austrian garrison into Brunswic, from whence he might easily make an irruption into Hanover. He had concluded a strict alliance with the Czarina, and collected an army of 30,000 men, ready to march from the Netherlands to the invasion of Holland.

But the measures adopted in opposition to

* Walpole Papers.

these hostile designs, disconcerted his views; 20,000 Danes, and 12,000 Swedes, were subsidised by England and France; 12,000 Hessians taken into English pay; and a French army was collecting on the frontiers of Germany. The death of the Czarina, in May, 1727, deprived the Emperor of a powerful ally; the king of Prussia began to waver; the princes and circles of Germany refused to consider the cause of the house of Austria as the cause of the empire; and as the king of Spain was unable to supply him with those large sums of money, which the unbounded promises of Ripperda had led him to expect, Charles found himself unable to resist the powerful combination against him. He sacrificed Spain to his own safety; and after a short negotiation, commenced by the Pope, and continued through the mediation of France, he signed at Paris, on the 31st of May, in his own name, and in that of Spain, the preliminaries of peace with England, France, and Holland. He agreed to suspend the charter of the Ostend company for seven years; confirmed all the treaties in force anterior to 1725, and consented to submit to a general congress the termination of the disputes subsisting between the allies of Hanover and Vienna.

Philip the Fifth having, in consequence of his disagreement with France, no minister at Paris, the preliminaries were signed at Vienna in the beginning of June, by the duke of Bournonville, the Spanish embassador; the fifth article declaring that they should be executed imme-

diately after the signature by the Emperor and the allies, and by Spain eight days after the king of Spain had received them signed. In consequence of this agreement, George the First issued orders to lord Portmore, governor of Gibraltar, and his admirals, both on the coasts of Spain, and in the West Indies, to cease all hostilities, and to restore all prizes taken from Spain; to permit the return of the galleons to Europe, and to raise the blockade of Porto Bello, and the other ports in the West Indies. In return, it was expected that the siege of Gibraltar would be raised, and the prizes taken from England, particularly the Prince Frederick, belonging to the South Sea company, at Vera Cruz, would be restored.

On proroguing the parliament, May 15, the king observed, in his speech from the throne, in a language which breathed the pacific sentiments of Walpole, "The siege of Gibraltar proves, beyond all dispute, the aim and design of the engagements entered into by the Emperor and the king of Spain; but the preparations I had made for the defence of that place, and the bravery of my troops, will, I doubt not, convince them of the rashness and folly of that undertaking. However the love of peace has hitherto prevailed on me, even under this high provocation, to suspend, in some measure, my resentments; and instead of having immediate recourse to arms, and demanding of my allies that assistance, which they are engaged and ready to give me, I have concurred with the most Chris-

tian king, and the States General, in making such overtures of accommodation, as must convince all the world of the uprightness of our intentions, and of our sincere disposition to peace; and demonstrate, to whose ambition and thirst of power the calamities of a war are to be imputed, if these just and reasonable propositions are rejected. In the mean time, I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that the crown of Sweden has acceded to the treaty of Hanover, and the convention between me, his most Christian majesty, and the king of Denmark, is actually signed."* Such was the state of the negotiation, when the king departed for Hanover, in June 1727.

* Journals. Chandler.

CHAPTER 30.

1727.

Cabals of the Duchess of Kendal and Bolingbroke to remove Walpole —Bolingbroke's Interview with the King—Sanguine Hopes of Opposition—Death of the King—Memoirs of his Wife, the unfortunate Sophia of Zell.

AT this period, Walpole stood in the highest estimation with the king and nation; and his pacific sentiments were so well known, that all who desired the blessing of peace, wished for his continuance in office; yet rumours of a change in administration were believed and circulated; and a formal attempt was made by Bolingbroke, in co-operation with the duchess of Kendal, to obtain his removal, and to substitute himself in his place. A full account of this intrigue, which has occasioned various conjectures and uncertain speculations, is here given from undoubted authorities.

The duchess of Kendal, who, by the death of lady Darlington, remained without a rival in the confidence of the king, had, in consideration of £.11,000, assured lord Bolingbroke that she would obtain his complete restoration;* but having failed in effecting her promise, she threw

* Chapter 25.

the whole blame on Sir Robert Walpole, as the person who obstructed the king's designs in his favour; and though she was inclined to second all attempts for the purpose of obtaining his disgrace, yet many circumstances prevented her from exerting her influence in favour of Bolingbroke.

She was become timid and cautious; fearful of distressing the mind of the king who was declining in years and health, and easily depressed. She was unwilling to offend the ministers, who, besides the pension of £.7,500 from the exchequer, which it depended on their punctuality to discharge, secured her good-will by private presents, and supplied her with various means of gratifying her rapacity. She affected great concern for the interest of England, and sacrificed to her own tranquillity, the concerns of the Hanoverian junta. In these circumstances, it was no easy task to rouse her active exertions; but Bolingbroke paid her assiduous court; his wife was no less constant in her attendance, and both anxiously watched for a favourable opportunity, which at length seemed to present itself.

The eldest son of Sir Robert Walpole had been appointed ranger of Richmond Park, and the minister, while a new lodge was building, took a small tenement on Richmond Hill, where the king after shooting, occasionally dined with him, and passed the afternoon drinking punch, of which he was excessively fond, in an easy and convivial manner. The duchess, alarmed at this familiar intercourse, and anxious to ren-

der these visits less frequent, attempted, by means of some German friends, who were generally of the party to break up the meeting sooner than the usual time of retiring; but their attempts having no effect, the duchess listened to the overtures of Bolingbroke, who artfully fomented her jealousy against Sir Robert Walpole, and prevailed on her to second his efforts.

He drew up a long memorial, full of invectives against the minister, which the duchess of Kendal secretly delivered to the king. After stating in various instances the misconduct of administration, he concluded, by requesting an audience, and undertook to demonstrate that the kingdom must inevitably be ruined, should Sir Robert Walpole continue at the head of the treasury. The king put this memorial into the hands of the minister, who concluded, that the person who conveyed it, could not be ignorant of the contents. After some inquiry, he traced it to the duchess of Kendal, who, on being interrogated, acknowledged that she had delivered it, and attempted to justify her conduct by frivolous excuses. Walpole in reply, only entreated her as a favour, to second the instances of Bolingbroke, and to procure for him that audience which he so earnestly solicited. The duchess, after several endeavours to excuse herself, promised compliance. At a proper interval, Walpole besought the king to grant an audience to Bolingbroke; and urged the propriety, by observing, that if this request was rejected, much clamour would be raised against him for keeping

the king to himself, and for permitting none to approach his person who might tell unwelcome truths.

The king declined complying in so positive a manner, that Walpole could not venture to press it any farther in person; but waited on the duchess to renew his application. He found lady Bolingbroke on a visit, and when she retired, was informed, that the king was unwilling to admit Bolingbroke, on a supposition that it would make him uneasy. Walpole repeated his earnest entreaties, and declared that he could not be easy, until the audience was granted. These pressing solicitations finally had their effect; and Bolingbroke was admitted into the closet.

While Walpole was attending in an adjoining apartment, lord Lechmere came, and demanded admission for the signature of papers, which he had brought as chancellor of the duchy of Cornwall. He was informed that Bolingbroke was with the king, and that Walpole was also waiting. In the midst of his surprise, Bolingbroke coming out, Lechmere instantly rushed into the closet, and without making any apology, or entering upon his own business, burst out into the most violent invectives against Walpole, whom he reviled as not contented with doing mischief himself, but as having introduced one who was, if possible worse than himself, to be his assistant. The king, delighted with this mistake, calmly asked him, if he would undertake the office of

prime minister. Lechmere made no reply, but continued pouring forth his invectives, and finally departed without having offered any of the papers to sign. Walpole found the king highly diverted and occupied with this incident, and it was some time before he had an opportunity of inquiring the subject of Bolingbroke's conversation. The king slightly answered, "*Bagatelles, bagatelles.*"

Thus was this formidable attack defeated by the prudence and firmness of the minister; the king continued his confidential visits, and on his departure for Hanover, ordered him to have the lodge in Richmond Park finished against his return.*

Such is the account of this extraordinary transaction, given by Walpole himself; † yet other reports have been circulated, which deserve consideration. Bolingbroke so confidently and repeatedly asserted, that on the king's return from Hanover, he should be appointed minister, that this opinion obtained belief, not only from his friends and partisans, but from others who were less inimical to the minister, and less desirous of his fall. Swift expresses his hopes on the subject, with his usual freedom, in a letter to Dr. Sheridan, May 13th, 1727; and Atterbury drew up a memorial to cardinal Fleury, in which he treated the fall of the minister as a

* From Lord Orford.

† Etough's Minutes of a Conversation with Sir Robert Walpole in September 1727. Correspondence.

certain event. Pelham also told speaker Onslow,* that at this period, Walpole was so convinced of Bolingbroke's intended elevation, as to have adopted the resolution of resigning and accepting a peerage, but was deterred by the remonstrances of the duke of Devonshire, and the representations of the princess of Wales, who dissuaded him from accepting an office which would incapacitate him from taking his accustomed lead in the house of commons.

On the other hand, Horace Walpole, lady Walsingham, and the duchess of Kendal herself, in a conversation with Sir Matthew Decker, asserted that the king did not intend to dismiss Walpole. It is not difficult, however, to reconcile these contradictory reports. It was natural for Bolingbroke to propagate an opinion tending to exalt his own importance; it is probable that Walpole, in a peevish moment of dissatisfaction, might have expressed a resolution of retiring; and the whole account might possibly have received its greatest authority from Walpole's own declaration, that knowing the venality of the duchess of Kendal, her ascendancy over the king, and the influence of Bolingbroke over her, he was not without apprehensions that her efforts might have finally succeeded.

The king departed for Hanover on the 3d of June; he enjoyed perfect health till he arrived at Delden. He was entertained by the count de Twittel, at a country house about twenty miles from that town. The king eat some me-

* Onslow's Remarks. Correspondence, Period IV.

lons after supper, which probably caused the indigestion of which he died. He returned that evening to Delden, and set out early the next morning, June 10, after breakfasting on a cup of chocolate. On his arrival at Bentheim, the king felt himself indisposed, but continued his journey in opposition to the repeated entreaties of his suite. His indisposition increased, and when he arrived at Ippenburen, he was quite lethargic; his hand fell down as if lifeless, and his tongue hung out of his mouth. He gave, however, signs of life, by continually crying out, as well as he could articulate, Osnabrug, Osnabrug. This impatience to reach Osnabrug, induced the attendants not to stop at Ippenburen, but to hasten on in hopes of arriving at that city before he died. But it was too late. The exact time and place of his death cannot be ascertained; but he probably expired either as the carriage was ascending the hill near Ippenburen, or on the summit. On their arrival at the palace of his brother, the bishop of Osnabrug, he was immediately bled, but all attempts to recover him proved ineffectual.* A courier had been dispatched to the duchess of Kendal, who had remained at Delden, with the account of the king's dangerous situation. He met her on the road, about two miles the other side of the Rhine; but as she was hastening on, another courier announced his death. She beat her

* For this account of the king's death, I am indebted to my friend Nathaniel W. Wraxall, esquire, who obtained it from persons at Hanover and Osnabrug, who recollected the event.

breast, tore her hair, and gave signs of extreme grief; and then dismissing the English ladies, who accompanied her, took the road to Brunswick, where she continued three months.*

Lord Townshend, who was on his journey to Hanover, repaired instantly to Osnabrug, where he arrived on the 22d, early in the morning. But finding the king demised, he wrote a letter† of condolence and congratulation to the new sovereign, and taking post, pursued his journey to England.

Before I conclude the reign of George the First, one remarkable fact must not be omitted. As the king could not readily speak English, nor Sir Robert Walpole French, the minister was obliged to deliver his sentiments in Latin; and as neither could converse in that language with readiness and propriety, Walpole was frequently heard to say, that during the reign of the first George, he governed the kingdom by means of bad latin.‡ It is a matter of wonder, that under such disadvantages, the king should take pleasure in transacting business with him;

* The duchess of Kendal was sister of Frederic Achatius, count of Schulenburgh and Hedlen. Petronelle Melesina, countess of Walsingham, who afterwards married the earl of Chesterfield, was supposed to be her daughter by George the First, though she was considered as her niece. The duchess returned to England, and died in 1743, at a very advanced age. She principally resided at Kendal House, Isleworth, which was after her death converted into a tea garden. Her immense property was divided amongst her German relations, and the countess of Chesterfield.

† Sir Cyril Wick to Stephen Poyntz, June 27, 1727. Correspondence. Lord Townshend to the king.

‡ From lord Orford.

a circumstance principally owing to the method and perspicuity of his calculations, and to the extreme facility with which he arranged and explained the most abstruse and difficult combinations of finance.

It has been already observed, that George the First had, by a left-handed marriage, espoused the duchess of Kendal, though his real wife, the unfortunate Sophia Dorothy, was still alive. Sophia was the only child of William duke of Zell, by Eleanor d'Emiers, of the house of Olbreuse, in France; she was born in 1666, and her hand was courted by the most powerful princes of Germany. His father Ernest Augustus having once designed him for the princess Anne, afterwards queen of England; he actually went to England to pay his addresses, and was well received and approved by the whole court. But he was recalled by his father, who had suddenly concluded a match for him with his cousin.

Sophia, at the time of their marriage, was only sixteen, and was a princess of great personal charms and mental endowments;* yet her attractions did not retain the affections of her husband. After she had brought him a son and a daughter, he neglected his amiable consort, and attached himself to a favourite mistress.

Such was the situation of Sophia, when count Konigsmark, a Swedish nobleman, arrived at Hanover. He was a man of good figure, and professed gallantry; had been formerly enamoured of Sophia at Zell, and was supposed to have

* Rimius.

made some impression on her heart. On the sight of her, his passion, which had been diminished by absence, broke out with increasing violence; he had the imprudence publicly to renew his attentions; and as George was absent at the army, made his solicitations with redoubled ardour. Information of his attachment, and of his success, was conveyed to Ernest Augustus; and one evening, as the count came out of her apartment, and was crossing a passage, he was put to death by persons placed to intercept him, in the presence of the Elector; and tradition still marks the spot where this assassination was committed. Sophia was immediately put under arrest; and though she solemnly protested her innocence; yet circumstances spoke strongly against her.

George, who never loved his wife, gave implicit credit to the account of her infidelity, as related by his father; consented to her imprisonment, and obtained from the ecclesiastical consistory, a divorce, which was passed on the 28th of December 1694. Even her father, the duke of Zell, who doated on his only daughter, does not seem to have entertained any doubts of her guilt; for he continued upon the strictest terms of friendship with Ernest Augustus, and his son-in-law.

The unfortunate Sophia was confined in the castle of Alden, situated on the small river Aller, in the duchy of Zell. She terminated her miserable existence, after a long captivity of thirty-two years on the 13th of November 1726, in

the sixty-first year of her age, only seven months before the death of George the First; and she was announced in the Gazette, under the title of the Electress Dowager of Hanover.

During her whole confinement, she behaved with no less mildness than dignity; and on receiving the sacrament once every week, never omitted on that awful occasion, making the most solemn asseverations, that she was not guilty of the crime laid to her charge. Subsequent circumstances have come to light, which appear to justify her memory; and reports are current at Hanover, that her character was basely defamed, and that she fell a sacrifice to the jealousy and perfidy of the countess of Platen, favourite mistress of Ernest Augustus. Being enamoured of count Konigsmark, who slighted her overtures, jealousy took possession of her breast: she determined to sacrifice both the lover and the princess to her vengeance, and circumstances favoured her design.

The prince was absent at the army; Ernest Augustus was a man of warm passions and violent temper, easily irritated, and when irritated, incapable of control. Sophia herself had treated count Konigsmark with regard and attention, and the lover was hot-headed, self-sufficient, priding himself on his personal accomplishments, and accustomed to succeed in affairs of gallantry.

Those who exculpate Sophia, assert either that a common visit was construed into an act of criminality; or that the countess of Platen, at a

late hour, summoned count Konigsmark in the name of the princess, though without her connivance; that on being introduced, Sophia was surprised at his intrusion; that on quitting the apartment, he was discovered by Ernest Augustus, whom the countess had placed in the gallery, and was instantly assassinated by persons whom she had suborned for that purpose.

It is impossible, at this distance of time, to discover and trace the circumstances of this mysterious transaction, on which no person at the court of Hanover durst at that time deliver his opinion. But the sudden murder of count Konigsmark may be urged as a corroboration of this statement: for had his guilt, and that of Sophia been unequivocal, would he not have been arrested and brought to a trial, for the purpose of proving their connection, and confronting him with the unfortunate princess?

Many persons of credit at Hanover have not scrupled, since the death of Ernest Augustus and George the First, to express their belief that the imputation cast on Sophia was false and unjust. It is also reported, that her husband having made an offer of reconciliation, she gave this noble and disdainful answer of haughty virtue, unconscious of stain: "If what I am accused of is true, I am unworthy of his bed; and if my accusation is false, he is unworthy of me; I will not accept his offers."

George the Second, who doated on his mother, was fully convinced of her innocence. He once made an attempt to see her, and even

crossed the Aller on horseback opposite to the Castle, but was prevented from having an interview by the baron de Bulow, to whose care the Elector, her husband, had committed her. Had she survived his accession, he intended to restore her to liberty, and acknowledge her as queen dowager. Her memory was so dear to him, that he secretly kept her portrait in his possession: and the morning after the news of the death of George the First had reached London, Mrs. Howard observed (in the antichamber of the king's apartment) a picture of a woman in the electoral robes, which proved to be that of Sophia.

George the Second told queen Caroline, that in making some repairs in the palace of Hanover, the bones of count Konigsmark were found under the floor of the antichamber which led to the apartment of Sophia. The queen mentioned this fact to Sir Robert Walpole,* and in various conversations which she held on this subject, she appeared fully convinced of her innocence; an opinion which the minister himself constantly adhered to.†

* From lord Orford.

† The account of Sophia of Zell, is derived from the MS. Journal of N. W. Wraxall, Esq.; Etough's Papers, and various communications, which I received at Hanover, and Polnitz's Memoirs. A pretended history is published under the title of *Histoire Secrète de la Duchesse d'Hanovre, Epouse de George Premier, Roi de la Grande Bretagne. Les malheurs de cette infortunée princesse, sa prison au Chateau d'Ahler, où elle a fini ses jours; ses intelligences secrettes avec le comte de Konigsmark, assassiné à ce sujet*, which is a mere romance.

PERIOD THE FOURTH:

From the Accession of GEORGE II. *to the Resignation of Lord* TOWNSHEND.

1727—1730.

CHAPTER 31.

1727.

Accession and Character of George the Second—Education—Character—Person—Conduct—and Influence of Queen Caroline—Account of Mrs. Howard, afterwards Countess of Suffolk—Instances of the Jealousy entertained by the Queen, of her influence.

GEORGE the Second, son of George the First, by Sophia, princess of Luneburg Zell, was born at Hanover the 30th of October 1683, and principally educated under the direction of his grandmother, the electress Sophia. Being at a very early period initiated into the profession of arms, he made the campaign of 1708 with the allied army in the Netherlands, under the command of the duke of Marlborough. He greatly distinguished himself as a volunteer at the battle of Oudenard, where he charged the enemy at the head of the Hanoverian dragoons, and

had his horse shot under him.* In 1708, he was created duke of Cambridge, and knight of the garter; and at the accession of George the First, was so elated, that he said to an English gentleman, "I have not one drop of blood in my veins which is not English, and at the service of my father's subjects."† He accompanied the king to England; soon after he had taken his seat in the privy council, was created prince of Wales; and during the king's absence in 1716, was appointed guardian and lieutenant of the realm.

The unfortunate misunderstanding which took place between him and his father, has been already related; and although a reconciliation was effected through the interposition of Devonshire and Walpole, yet it was more apparent than real: the king gave a strong proof that his jealousy was not abated, by never again consigning to him the government of affairs during his absence. Notwithstanding this cause of dissatisfaction, the prince, from the period of the reconciliation, seldom formally opposed his father's government; but passed a retired life, confining himself principally to a small circle of select friends, with whom he lived in habits of strict intimacy: of these, the earl of Scarborough and Sir Spencer Compton were the most favoured.

George the Second was, at the time of his accession, in the 45th year of his age; and bore

* Rimius's Memoirs of the House of Brunswick.
† Polnitz, vol. iv. p. 230. 232.

the character of a prince of high integrity, honour, and veracity. His countenance was pleasing, dignified, and expressive, with prominent eyes, and a Roman nose. In person he was well proportioned, but much below the middle size; to which the ballad on the seven wise men alludes, speaking of Richard, afterwards lord Edgecumbe, who was very diminutive:

> "When Edgecumbe spoke, the prince in sport
> Laugh'd at the merry elf;
> Rejoic'd, to see within his court
> One shorter than himself.
>
> I am glad (cry'd out the quibbling squire)
> My *lowness* makes your highness *higher*."

He possessed one great advantage over his father, that he was not ignorant of the language and constitution of England, although his knowledge of both was limited. He was naturally reserved, except to those who belonged to his household, or were admitted to his familiar society; fond of business, and of great application whenever application was necessary; well acquainted with the state of foreign affairs; and his observations, and replies to the notes of his ministers, dictated by the occasion, prove good sense, judgment, and rectitude of intentions.* His temper was warm, vehement, and irritable; prone to sudden emotions of anger, and not easily appeased. He was slow in deliberation, cautious in decision; but his opinion being once formed, he became inflexible, and impatient of remon-

* Correspondence, Period IV.

strance. He was strictly œconomical, punctual in the discharge of his expenses; so peculiarly methodical in all his actions and occupations, that, to use the expression of a nobleman much about his person, "he seemed to think his having done a thing to-day, an unanswerable reason for doing it to-morrow."* He was rigidly attached to etiquette and punctilious forms, and fond of military parade. Like his father, without the smallest taste for the arts, or love of science; he gave no patronage to literature, unless from the suggestions of his queen, or the intercession of his ministers. Cold and phlegmatic in his general appearance, he at the same time possessed a high degree of sensibility; of which he gave many proofs which would appear incredible to those who are not acquainted with his domestic character, particularly on the death of his queen, and the resignation of Sir Robert Walpole. The love of women was his predominant weakness; but it did not lead him into any excess which affected his public conduct, or interfered with the interests of his kingdom. He had seen, and lamented, that his father had been governed by his mistresses; and was so extremely cautious to avoid a similar error, that the countess of Yarmouth, the only one among them who possessed any real influence, could seldom venture to exert her interest in public concerns. She once requested Horace Walpole to procure a trifling place for one of her servants, but charged him not to mention to the king

* Lord Hervey to H. Walpole, Oct. 31, 1735.

that it was at her request; "because," she added, "if it is known that I have applied, I have no chance of succeeding."* But his conduct was far different in regard to queen Caroline, of whose judgment and good sense he had the highest opinion, and in whom he ever placed the most implicit confidence.

Some of the French writers call history *la fable convenue*, and not without some degree of reason; for most histories are written either by authors who have been themselves interested in the events which they relate, and gloss over the transactions of their own party, or are composed by writers who have not access to original papers, know little more than common occurrences, and derive their principal information from uncertain publications, traditional reports, gazettes, and news-papers. The personage whose character I am attempting to delineate, will confirm the truth of these observations; for the historians of the reign of George the Second, scarcely mention the name of queen Caroline, who almost entirely governed the king during the first ten years of his reign; who bore her faculties so meekly, and with such extraordinary prudence, as never to excite the least uneasiness even in a sovereign highly tenacious of his authority, but contrived that her opinion should appear as if it had been his own; who solely occasioned the continuance of Sir Robert Walpole in the ministry; who patronised and promoted Herring, Hoadley, Clarke, Hare, Sher-

* From Lord Walpole.

locke, Butler, and Pearce; and without whose recommendation or concurrence, scarcely any situation in church or state was conferred.

Caroline Wilhelmina, daughter of John Frederic, Margrave of Anspach, by the princess of Saxe-Eysenach, was born in 1683. Having lost her father when she was very young, and her mother marrying John George, the Fourth, elector of Saxony, she was left under the guardianship of Frederic, elector of Brandenburg, afterwards king of Prussia; passed part of her early days at the court of Berlin,* and received her education under the superintendance of her aunt, the accomplished Sophia Charlotte,† sister

* Polnitz.

† Sophia Charlotte, the second wife of Frederic, was the daughter of Ernest Augustus, elector of Hanover. This elegant and accomplished princess was born in 1668; and in 1681, having espoused Frederic, then electoral prince, became, on his accession to the throne, the great ornament of his splendid court. Her features were regular, yet expressive; her form, though below the middle stature, was elegant and graceful; her demeanour dignified and polite; and her conduct ever irreproachable. She never interfered in affairs of state, though always ready, when called upon, to aid with her counsels, journies, and correspondence, the views of the king. Her understanding was highly cultivated; she spoke the principal languages of Europe with such ease and fluency, that she usually addressed herself to foreigners in their respective tongues; she was well versed in history, conversant in different branches of natural philosophy, and not unacquainted even with scholastic divinity. Though her learning was so profound, that she was styled the Female Philosopher, she was not only extremely diffident, but careful to avoid the affectation of wishing to display her multifarious acquirements. She was no stranger to the polite accomplishments, fond of dancing, and did not disdain to be an actress in plays which were performed by her command: she excelled in music, sung and composed with taste; and was the great patroness of science and the arts. She drew Leibnitz to Berlin, and astonished that great philosopher with the extent of her capacity, the depth of her re-

of George the First. From her example and instructions, she imbibed that politeness of demeanour and dignity of character, those sentiments of philosophy, that ardent love of learning, and fondness for metaphysical knowledge, which merited the eulogium of Clarke and Leibnitz.

She gave an early instance of her attachment to the protestant religion. The fame of her beauty and accomplishments attracted the notice of the archduke Charles, son of the emperor Leopold the First, and afterwards Emperor himself, who made a tender of his hand. Not allured by the splendor of the family into which

searches, and the solidity of her observations. She died at Hanover in 1705, on a visit to her mother the electress Sophia, in the 87th year of her age; and displayed on her death-bed the utmost calmness and resignation. To the king her husband she wrote a tender letter, thanking him for his care, and recommending her domestics to his protection. To her brother, who was disconsolate at her approaching dissolution, she said, "Nothing is so natural as death; I have long considered it as a debt; and though I am young enough to have lived a few years longer, yet I feel no regret in dying." When La Bergerie, a Calvinist minister, offered his spiritual assistance, she said; "Friends are proved in time of necessity; you offer your assistance at a moment when I can no longer serve you; accept my thanks, which are all that I can bestow." Then turning to him, as he was going to exhort her, she continued; "For twenty years I have seriously examined my religion; I have perused the books which treat on that subject with too much attention to be in the smallest doubt; you can say nothing to me which I do not know; and I can assure you, that I depart in tranquillity." Her physician representing to her that she increased her complaint by speaking; "Adieu, then, La Bergerie," she added; "I remain your good friend." Observing one of her attendants weeping, she exclaimed, "Why do you weep? could you think that I was immortal?" And then stretching out her hand to her brother; "Dear brother," she cried, "I am suffocated;" and in an instant expired.

she might have been adopted, she declined the offer without hesitation: "But Providence," observes Addison, "kept a store in reward for such an exalted virtue; and, by the secret methods of its wisdom, opened a way for her to become the greatest of her sex among those who profess that faith to which she adhered with so much Christian magnanimity."*

Caroline espoused, in 1705, George electoral prince of Hanover, afterwards George the Second. She was the free and voluntary choice of the prince. As he had always declared his resolution never to unite himself with a consort on mere political considerations, he was left uninfluenced in his decision by his father. Having received a favourable report of the princess, he repaired to Anspach incognito, and conversed with her for an hour in one of the court parties. Her person, manners, and conversation, made a deep impression on his heart, and from that moment he testified his determination to listen to no other proposal. His offer was accepted, and the marriage was soon after concluded.†

Queen Caroline was esteemed handsome before she had the small-pox, and became too corpulent. Tickell did not flatter her in his poem of Kensington Gardens, when he said;

"Here England's daughter, darling of the land,
Sometimes, surrounded with her virgin band,

* Freeholder, No. 21.

† Letter from Mr. Poley, British envoy at Hanover, to the duke of Marlborough, July 28, 1705. Marlborough Papers.

Gleams through the shades. She, tow'ring o'er the rest,
Stands fairest of the fairer kind confest;
Form'd to gain hearts that Brunswick's cause deny'd,
And charm a people to her father's side." *

She had a hand and arm greatly admired for whiteness and elegance, a penetrating eye, "and a smile celestial," † an expressive countenance, great sweetness and grace, particularly when she spoke. But these charms of her person were far surpassed by the endowments of her mind. She possessed quickness of apprehension, a natural good understanding, which had been duly cultivated; and a considerable knowledge in many branches of useful and polite literature. ‡

Her levees were a strange picture of the motley character and manners of a queen and a learned woman. She received company while she was at her toilette; prayers, and sometimes a sermon, were read; learned men and divines were intermixed with courtiers and ladies of the household: the conversation turned on metaphysical subjects, blended with repartees, sallies of mirth, and the tittle-tattle of a drawing-room. She had a happy turn for conversation, and a readiness in adapting her discourse to the persons with whom she talked; possessed peculiar talents for mirth and humour; excelled in mimicry, and was fond of displaying it; was pleased with making a repartee herself, and with hearing it from others. Her conduct, during the unfortunate misunderstanding which took place be-

* Tickell's Kensington Gardens, p. 258.
† Tickell. ‡ Rimius.

tween George the First and her husband, when prince of Wales, was so prudent and dignified, that the late king always behaved to her with marks of due respect and affection, though he never cordially loved her. Yet notwithstanding her courtesy, affability of deportment, condescension to men of letters, and fondness for social intercourse, she had a high notion of the regal station, and was partial to the etiquette of a court. She seldom forgot that she was a queen, and always kept up a due state both in public and private. She would occasionally dine with Sir Robert Walpole at Chelsea; but even her visits to a favourite minister were subjected to form and etiquette. She sat down to table with lady Walpole, the royal family whom she brought with her, and the lady in waiting. Sir Robert always stood behind her chair, and gave her the first plate; then retired into another apartment, where dinner was served for him and the queen's household.*

Queen Caroline was fond of conversing and corresponding with men of learning, and particularly with divines, whom she often perplexed with questions, concerning the doctrines of the different churches, and consulted with a view of settling her faith. Hoadley, Clarke, Hare, and Sherlocke, were among the number to whom she principally applied. She carried on a correspondence on these subjects, by means of her bed-chamber woman, Mrs. Clayton, afterwards lady Sundon, who had acquired a powerful

* From Lord Orford.

ascendancy over her. The divine whom she most particularly noticed, and by whose conversation she often owned that she was most instructed, was Dr. Clarke, whose profound learning, in all branches of sacred and profane literature, was scarcely ever equalled, whose piety was unquestioned, and whose playful manners and placid temper rendered him as amiable as he was learned. Dr. Clarke had only the rectory of St. James's, which was given him by queen Anne, and the mastership of Wigston Hospital; and queen Caroline proposed placing him on the bench, an honour which Clarke invariably declined. Finding that he persisted in his refusal, she desired Sir Robert Walpole to try the powers of his rhetoric, which had never been employed in vain on a similar occasion. The minister obeyed; and in a conference at Kensington palace, used every argument in his power to prevail on Clarke to accept the proffered dignity; when Clarke declined, he continued to press it; and the conference was so long, that the candles were burnt down in the sockets, and the pages came into the apartment to know if fresh lights were not wanted.* But the rhetoric of the minister had no effect, and the queen was highly disappointed, that she was prevented from placing Dr. Clarke on the bench of bishops.

Queen Caroline maintained a correspondence with Leibnitz on the most abstract sciences, in which she supremely delighted. In the course

* From Lord Orford and Etough's Papers.

of this literary intercourse, the German philosopher having insinuated some suspicions that the foundations of natural religion were in danger of being hurt by the doctrines of Sir Isaac Newton, she applied to Clarke for an answer to this suggestion. The answer brought on a reply, the reply a second answer, and the controversy was carried on with all the spirit and learning which those great philosophers could throw into such dry subjects as the principles of natural religion and philosophy, free-will and fatality. They submitted their respective arguments to the princess as to an umpire; and vied in unfolding their systems in as conspicuous a manner as the nature of so intricate a subject would allow. The princess was highly flattered with this arbitration, and permitted Dr. Clarke, whose opinion she seems to have embraced, to dedicate to her the account of the controversy. In this dedication, the learned author has not omitted to pay a tribute to her desire of knowledge and love of truth, in a strain of panegyric which could hardly be avoided on such an occasion. Nor was it solely dictated by flattery; for Whiston* informs us, that he often heard Clarke speak with admiration of her marvellous sagacity and judgment, in the several parts of the dispute.

But although this accomplished princess possessed considerable influence over George the Second, she had acted with so much caution, and behaved with such moderation and pru-

* Whiston's Historical Memoirs of Clarke.

dence, that she was considered at the time of his accession, by the party in opposition, as a mere cypher, and the whole power and influence over the king was supposed to be lodged in the hands of Mrs. Howard, afterwards countess of Suffolk.

Henrietta, sister of John, the first earl of Buckinghamshire, was eldest daughter of Sir Henry Hobart,* of Blickling, in Norfolk, and espoused Charles Howard, younger son of Henry, fifth earl of Suffolk, whom she accompanied to Hanover before the death of queen Anne. Having ingratiated herself into the favour of Caroline, then electoral princess, she accompanied her to England, and became her bed-chamber woman. If we were to draw an estimate of the understanding and character of Mrs. Howard, from the representations of Pope,† Swift, and Gay, during the time of her favour, we might suppose that she possessed every accomplishment and good quality which were ever the lot of a woman.

The real truth is, that Mrs. Howard was more remarkable for beauty than for understanding, and the passion which the king entertained for her, was rather derived from chance‡ than from any combination of those transcendant qualities, which Swift and Pope ascribed to their court divinity. She had been long wholly un-

* Collins's Peerage.

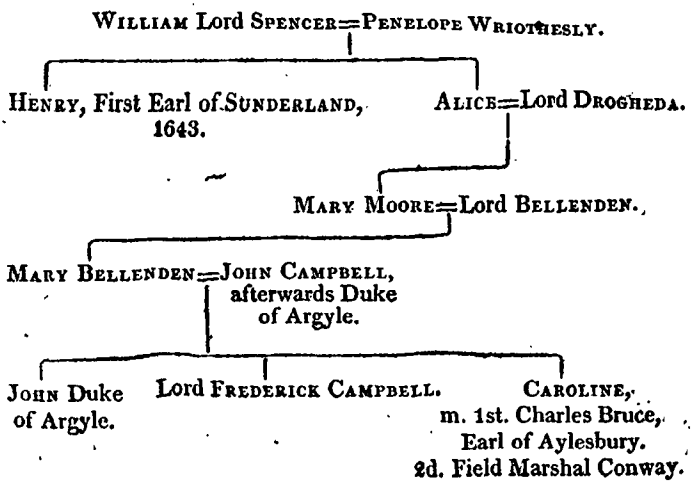
† See Pope's Letters to Swift, October 25th, 1725.—Miscellanies. Swift's Character of Mrs. Howard.—Gay's Epistle to Pope; and other parts of their respective works.

‡ From Lord Orford.

noticed by the prince, who was enamoured of another lady that was more cruel to the royal lover than Mrs. Howard. This lady was the beautiful and lively Mary Bellenden, daughter of lord Bellenden,* maid of honour to queen Caroline, when princess of Wales, and a great friend of Mrs. Howard. Gay alludes to her, in his ballad entitled Damon and Cupid, as one of the reigning beauties:

"So well I'm known at court,
"None asks where Cupid dwells;
"But readily resort,
"To *Bellenden's* or Lepell's."

* Sir William Bellenden, created a peer after the restoration of Charles the Second, died unmarried, making a conveyance of his estate and honour to John Ker, a younger son of William, the second earl of Roxburgh, who then changed his name to Bellenden, and took the arms. He married Mary, widow of William Ramsay, third earl of Dalhousee, and daughter of Henry Moore, first earl of Drogheda, by Alice his wife, daughter of William lord Spencer, by Penelope, daughter of Henry Wriothesly, earl of Southampton.


William Lord Spencer=Penelope Wriothesly.
Henry, First Earl of Sunderland, 1643.
Alice=Lord Drogheda.
Mary Moore=Lord Bellenden.
Mary Bellenden=John Campbell, afterwards Duke of Argyle.
John Duke of Argyle.
Lord Frederick Campbell.
Caroline, m. 1st. Charles Bruce, Earl of Aylesbury. 2d. Field Marshal Conway.

She is also thus described in an old ballad, made upon the quarrel between George the First and the prince of Wales, at the christening, when the prince and all his household were ordered to quit St. James's:

"But *Bellenden* we needs must praise,
"Who, as down the stairs she jumps;
"Sings over the hills and far away,"
"Despising doleful dumps."

This lovely and elegant woman rejected the addresses of the prince, and espoused, in 1720, John Campbell, then groom of the bed-chamber to the prince of Wales, and afterwards duke of Argyle. She was highly favoured by queen Caroline, and universally admired as an accomplished pattern of good sense, and exemplary conduct.

The prince, after having communicated his passion for Miss Bellenden to Mrs. Howard, and being rejected, became enamoured of his confidante.

Lord Chesterfield has observed, in the unfavourable portrait* which he has drawn of queen Caroline, *that she even favoured and promoted the gallantries of the king.* But this severe representation is totally devoid of truth, and proves little knowledge of her real disposition. It was a principle with her not to disgust the king with remonstrances, or to appear dissatisfied with his attentions to other women. But certainly never wife felt or lamented a husband's infidelities

* Chesterfield's Letters to his Son, also in Miscellaneous Works, vol. 3.

more than herself; although she had too much good sense and prudence, and too much respect for her character to treat her rivals with marks of ill humour, or to show, by her outward behaviour, symptoms of jealousy and displeasure. She was always able to disguise her feelings and conceal her uneasiness. Thus her behaviour to Mrs. Howard led many to suppose that she was in high estimation; and Swift, Pope, and Gay, repeatedly call her the chief favourite of the queen.

To her particular friends, queen Caroline was not wanting in complaints of the king's infidelities, and she used to call his favourite, by way of banter, her sister Howard. This expression was considered by the friends of the mistress as a proof of the queen's partiality and kindness, whereas it was in reality the strongest mark of aversion and contempt. But, in fact, the forced complacency of her outward behaviour, was a violent effort of prudence and discretion, and she never failed to oppose the rise of those who paid their court to the mistress. Among many instances which may be enumerated, I shall select those of Gay, Swift, and Chesterfield.

Gay began paying his court to her when she was electoral princess, and while he accompanied the earl of Clarendon as his secretary to Hanover. But the embassy lasted only nineteen days; and being disappointed in his hopes of preferment, by the death of queen Anne, the poet turned himself towards the rising sun, and soon after the accession of George the First,

drew the character of Caroline in a high strain of panegyric.*

The princess, not insensible to praise, received Gay, soon after her arrival in England, with great kindness, and gave him hopes of promotion. From this period he commenced courtier, paid a regular attendance, and was honoured with many marks of her patronage and protection. He continued, however, his attendance at court for twelve years, without obtaining a solid reward of his assiduity. At her command, he wrote his fables, for the duke of Cumberland, and being of a sanguine disposition, formed high expectations of promotion when the accession of George the Second would permit his patroness to provide for him. When that event took place, his hopes were greatly magnified on the queen's telling Mrs. Howard, in allusion to the fable of the Hare and many Friends,† that she would take up the hare. But his expectations were by these means raised so high, that he considered the offer of the place of gentleman usher to the princess Louisa, though above £.200 a year, as an insult, and rejected it with scorn.

Swift was convinced that the minister had prevented the bounty of queen Caroline from being shown to the author of, The Hare and many Friends, and he observes, alluding to it in a copy of verses addressed to Gay;

* An Epistle to a Lady, occasioned by the Arrival of the Princess of Wales.'

† Swift's Works, vol. 16. p. 170.

" Fain would I think our female friend sincere,
" Till *Bob, the poet's foe*, possest her ear, &c."

In another place, Swift asserts, that it was principally owing to the dedication prefixed to the Pastorals, in honour of Bolingbroke, and to some expressions in his fables, which displeased the court. He repeats this accusation in his letters and works, and had even the rudeness to hint it to Sir Robert Walpole himself, when he dined with him at Chelsea.* Gay was of the same opinion, and the second part of his fables, which were not printed till after his death, is full of sarcastic and splenetic allusions to the minister. But as Walpole was neither of a jealous or vindictive disposition, there is no reason to give credit to the aspersions of his enemies, and to suppose that he used his influence over queen Caroline, for the purpose of injuring Gay, particularly when another and a more natural motive of her conduct may be suggested.

In fact, Gay was the innocent cause of his own disgrace; for he thought that Mrs. Howard was all powerful at court, and that he, whom Swift humorously calls one of her led captains, should rise by her recommendation. Pope also, in a letter to Swift, alluding to Mrs. Howard, says, " *Gay puts his whole trust in that lady whom I described to you*, and whom you take to be an allegorical creature of fancy." And Gay thus expresses himself to Swift, " Mrs. Howard has declared herself very strongly, both to the king and queen, as my protector."† But in these

* Swift's Works, vol. 16. p. 169. † Ib. 168.

words, they unconsciously declare the cause of his disfavour. The queen's jealousy of the interference and credit of the mistress, obstructed his promotion; and his own indiscretion afterwards, destroyed every hope. Soon after this disappointment, he produced the Beggar's Opera; and both his conversation and writings being full of invectives against the court, all expectations of farther notice from the queen were obviously relinquished.

Swift also proved the ill policy of attempting to ingratiate himself with the queen, through the medium of Mrs. Howard. With a view of changing his preferments in Ireland for others in England, which the princess seemed to express an inclination to promote, he maintained a correspondence with Mrs. Howard, whom he praised in the most fulsome manner, and courted with the most affected assiduity, by letters when he was absent, and by personal attendance when he was in England. But as soon as the efforts of Mrs. Howard proved unsuccessful, Swift turned his satire against her, on whom he had heaped such unbounded encomiums, imputed his failure solely to her want of sincerity; and reproached her in very bitter and disrespectful terms. Lady Betty Germaine, and his friend Gay, in vain endeavoured to justify Mrs. Howard, and to prove that she was not to blame; but the misanthropic Swift, when he had once formed his opinion, was not easily convinced by any arguments. He says, in a letter to lady Betty Germaine, "For these reasons, I did al-

ways, and do still think, Mrs. Howard, now lady Suffolk, an absolute courtier." When this character was shown to lady Suffolk, she mildly observed, "It is very different from that which he sent me himself, and which I have in his own hand-writing."*

The earl of Chesterfield is another remarkable instance. He had long coveted the post of secretary of state, and an arrangement had been made in his favour. After an audience of the queen, to which he was introduced by Walpole, and thanking her for her concurrence, he had the imprudence to make a long visit to the mistress. The queen was informed of the circumstance, and his appointment did not take place.† At another time, he had requested the queen to speak to the king for some trifling favour. The queen promised, but forgot it. A few days afterwards, recollecting her promise, she expressed regret at her forgetfulness, and added, she would certainly mention it that very day. Chesterfield replied, that her majesty need not give herself that trouble, for lady Suffolk had spoken to the king. The queen made no reply; but on seeing the king, told him she had long promised to mention a trifling request to his majesty, but it was now needless, because lord Chesterfield had just informed her, that she had been anticipated by lady Suffolk. The king, who always preserved great decorum with the queen, and was very unwilling to have it supposed that the

* From lord Orford.

† Etough.—From the communication of Sir Robert Walpole.

favourite interfered, was extremely displeased, both with lord Chesterfield and his mistress. The consequence was that in a short time lady Suffolk went to Bath for her health and returned no more to court; Chesterfield was dismissed from his office of lord steward of the household; and never heard the reason until two years before his death, when he was informed by the earl of Orford, that his disgrace was owing to his having offended the queen by paying court to lady Suffolk.*

* Her husband having succeeded to the title of earl of Suffolk, on the death of his brother in June 1731, she became countess of Suffolk. At the period of her retirement from court, she was a widow, her husband having died on the 28th of September 1733, and she espoused, in July 1735, George Berkley, fourth son of Charles, second earl of Berkley. Lady Suffolk lived to an advanced age, not dying till 1767; she left no issue, an only son, which she had by her first husband, dying in 1745 unmarried.

CHAPTER 32.

1727.

Accession of George the Second—Rumours of a Change in Administration—Intrigues of the Tories, Pulteney, and Bolingbroke—Character of Sir Spencer Compton, who declines the Office of prime Minister—Continuation of Townshend and Walpole, by the Intervention of Queen Caroline—The good Effects of her Influence over the King.

THE news of the death of George the First, having reached London, a general belief was current that the administration would be totally changed. The new king was supposed to be irreconcilably offended with Sir Robert Walpole, as he had been frequently heard to protest, that when he came to the throne, that minister should never be employed.

Pulteney, before their open rupture, had informed the prince of Wales of some disrespectful expressions used on a former occasion, and told him that he was sold to his father's ministers, by persons who considered nothing but themselves and their own interest, and were in haste to make their fortunes.* Since their quarrel, he had undoubtedly exaggerated this representation, and, as he continued on good terms at Leicester House, naturally exerted his whole credit against Walpole.

* Answer to one Part of an infamous Libel.

Bolingbroke and the Tories had also caballed at Leicester House, and were supported by the whole weight and influence of the favourite, Mrs. Howard. Swift also, in a letter to his friend Dr. Sheridan, mentions the hopes of the Tories, and the certain dismission of Walpole.

In fact, Walpole himself was at this moment convinced of his removal, and yet was well satisfied that his exclusion could not be of long continuance. In conformity with these sentiments, he said to his friend Sir William Yonge, "I shall certainly go out; but let me recommend you not to go into violent opposition, as we must soon come in again."*

In this moment of probable disgrace, Walpole was deserted by many of his friends; and Sir Spencer Compton, whom the king had already avowed his intention of appointing minister, became the idol of the day. But the event turned out otherwise, and the public expectations were disappointed.

It is now well known, that the continuance of the new administration was principally owing to the influence of queen Caroline. Writers of great credit, but not acquainted with the interior situation of Leicester House at that period, have not scrupled to ascribe her patronage of Sir Robert Walpole, solely to the offers which he made to obtain from parliament a jointure of £. 100,000 a year, when Sir Spencer Compton could only venture to propose £. 60,000, as if motives of sordid interest had *alone* induced the

* From Sir George Yonge.

queen to protect the minister; and as if her conduct was derived from an instantaneous impulse, unconnected with any previous communication or intercourse. The offer had doubtless due effect; but a number of circumstances combined to influence her in favour of Sir Robert Walpole.

The queen was by no means ignorant of his character and abilities. While he was in opposition to government, from 1717 to 1720, he had continued in the highest favour with the prince of Wales. During this period, a woman of her good sense, could not fail of distinguishing that capacity for business, and those powers of intellect, which raised him to the head of his party; and his wise and able conduct upon the failure of the South Sea scheme, naturally increased this prepossession in his favour.

He had, in conjunction with lord Townshend, gratified the prince of Wales, by obtaining from the king the garter for the earl of Scarborough. And count Broglio, the French embassador, observes* on this occasion, "That ministers not unfrequently procured places for those persons who were attached to the prince, from the consideration that the time might come, when such a conduct would turn out to their advantage."

The duke of Devonshire, the great friend and supporter of Walpole, had continued on good terms with the princess of Wales. He had strongly impressed her with sentiments of high

* Count Broglio to the king of France, 24 July, 1724. Correspondence, Period III.

regard for his abilities and ministerial capacity, and represented him as the person who had principally counteracted the intrigues of the Jacobites, discovered the plot of bishop Atterbury, and whose good offices were essentially employed in preserving the family on the throne. Nor can a stronger proof be alleged of the height to which this confidential intercourse was carried, than that the resolution which he had once formed to resign, was communicated by the duke of Devonshire to the princess, and that she persuaded him to relinquish it.*

But the principal cause which secured to him the protection of the queen, was his prudent behaviour in regard to Mrs. Howard. He had penetration sufficient to foresee, that George the Second would be governed by his wife, whom he adored, and of whose abilities and good sense he had formed the highest idea, and not by his mistress, of whose judgment he never entertained any favourable opinion. The minister had always treated the princess of Wales with the highest respect, and declined paying court to Mrs. Howard; a mode of conduct, which, according to the opinion of superficial observers, would inevitably bring on his disgrace, but which, in effect, contributed to his continuance in office. A contrary mode of proceeding had inspired the queen with an invincible aversion to Pulteney, Bolingbroke, and the Tories. Hence she used all her influence with the king not to change the administration.

* Onslow's Remarks. Correspondence, Period IV.

The account of the king's death was brought first to the minister at Chelsea, in a dispatch from lord Townshend, who had accompanied George the First to the continent. He instantly repaired to the palace at Richmond. The king was then retired, as was his usual custom, to his afternoon's nap. On being informed that his father was dead, he continued for some time incredulous, until he was told that the minister was waiting in the antichamber with the express. He at length started up, and made his appearance half dressed; but he still retained his unbelief, until the dispatch from Townshend was produced. Walpole having knelt down, and kissed his hand, inquired whom his majesty would be pleased to appoint to draw up the declaration to the privy council? "Compton," replied the king with great abruptness, and Walpole quitted the apartment under the most mortifying impressions. He immediately waited on Sir Spencer Compton with the king's commands, who, unacquainted with the etiquette and forms of expression used on the occasion, avowed his ignorance, and requested the minister to draw up the declaration. Walpole complied, and Compton conveyed it to the king.*

Sir Spencer Compton was second surviving son of James earl of Northampton. After receiving a liberal education, and improving himself by foreign travels, he was introduced into parliament at an early period, and deserted the principles of his family, who were Tories, by

* From lord Orford.

adhering to the Whigs. He was made treasurer to the prince of Denmark, appointed manager for the trial of Sacheverel, was chairman in several important committees of elections and privileges, in which he acquitted himself with much approbation, and made himself master of the forms and proceedings of the House. At the accession of George the First, he was appointed treasurer to the prince of Wales; and his constant adherence to the Whigs, his intimate acquaintance with Walpole, his numerous connexions, and the character he had acquired for dispatch of business, secured him the place of speaker without opposition. With that honourable office he united, in 1721, the post of paymaster of the forces, and treasurer of Chelsea Hospital. He was created knight of the bath, on the revival of that order. Compton was not distinguished for brilliancy of genius, or eminence of abilities. His formal and solemn manner contributed to the support of his authority as speaker, and seemed to denote extent of knowledge and profundity of thought; while his assiduity in business, and punctuality in accounts, rendered him respectable in the opinion of George the Second, who being extremely regular in all his proceedings, loved regularity in others, and esteemed it one of the most essential requisites in a minister. Such was the person whom George the Second had selected; and as the monarch was usually deemed inflexible in his resolutions, the appointment seemed irrevocably fixed.

Walpole passed the two days which immediately followed the accession of the new king, in great agitation and held several conferences with his friends at Devonshire House. Scrope,* secretary to the treasury, who was admitted to one of these meetings, described the whole company, absorbed in gloom and consternation. Either the next, or the following day, Scrope repeated his visit to the desponding minister, and found no alteration in his mien and appearance. He first encouraged him in general terms to hope, and then added reasons for that encouragement, which he had from one, whose name he could not divulge. His friend had informed him, that queen Caroline was displeased with Compton, who had been deficient in deference and respect, and had conceived a high opinion of Walpole's ability for finance. She used to converse with George the First at chapel, on political subjects; and once in particular, having observed that a want of proper funds would oblige him to disband his Hanover troops, he replied, "No, for Walpole can convert stones into gold."† This anecdote recurred to her recollection; she communicated it to the king, and exerted herself to abate his predilection for Compton, and influence him in favour of Walpole. The truth of the information soon appeared; the queen was assiduously employed in removing the prejudices of the king. She represented the folly and hazard of dismissing

* Minutes of Scrope's Conversations with Etough. Correspondence, Period IV.

† See Chapter 30.

a well established ministry, and of forming a motley cabinet of Whigs and Tories; artfully took an opportunity of hinting the imprudence of placing a man at the head of the ministry, who could not draw up the declaration to be laid before the privy council, but was compelled to have recourse to him who was about to be dismissed. She also hinted, that Sir Robert Walpole had agreed to carry through the house of commons, an augmentation of £. 130,000 to the civil list.

These representations had their effect; and many other causes co-operated to change the king's sentiments. Sir Spencer Compton found himself unequal to the weight of government, and was not eager to take upon him so responsible an office. He was convinced, that he could not bear up against the opposition of Sir Robert Walpole, who had so much weight in the house of commons, and who would be supported by the united interests of Newcastle, Devonshire, Townshend, and the great leaders of the Whigs, unless a Tory administration was formed. George the Second was averse to throw himself into the hands of the Tories, and yet could not form a new ministry, which promised stability, without taking that step. Pulteney, the only man of great weight and influence among the Whigs in opposition, was by no means attached to the Tories, and would not have heartily coalesced with them. Bolingbroke was so extremely unpopular, that his re-

establishment in the house of lords, and admission into the ministry, would have occasioned great discontents among those who usually supported government. Lord Carteret, the only man of abilities who was cordially inclined to join the Tories, had little personal consequence, was not the leader of any party, and did not possess any influence in the house of commons.

The situation of foreign affairs also no less contributed to confirm the king in his resolution not to remove the ministry. The treaty of Hanover had been recently concluded, and the negotiations for the consummation of that alliance were in great forwardness. They had been planned and were conducting by lord Townshend, in co-operation with France. The opposition had warmly resisted the treaty, and might have introduced a new plan, which must have deranged and overturned the whole system of foreign politics. Cardinal Fleury, who then governed France, was intimately connected with Horace Walpole. He had adopted the pacific sentiments which influenced the English cabinet, and deprecated the change of that system which had kept Europe in peace for so long a period. When the news of the king's death reached Paris, Horace Walpole requested and obtained an immediate conference, which took place at Versailles on the ensuing day. In this conference, the French minister conveyed, in the strongest terms, professions of friendship from Louis ths Fifteenth to George the Second; and in his own name

declared his firm resolution to maintain the good understanding between the two crowns. He also expressed these sentiments in a letter which he wrote on the same day to Horace Walpole. Immediately after the conference,* Horace Walpole quitted Paris, without waiting for leave of absence, repaired to London, and delivered his letter to the king in person. The king was at first extremely dissatisfied with him for quitting his station so abruptly; but during the conference, which lasted two hours,† he gradually softened, as Horace Walpole explained, with great address, the relative situations of England and France, effaced the ill impressions which had been entertained of his and his brother's conduct, and confirmed the sentiments of the French cabinet, which were contained in the letter from cardinal Fleury. Accordingly, the king wrote, with his own hand, a letter to the cardinal,‡ in which he declared his resolution to pursue the same measures as were pursued by his father, and to continue the same ministers who had conducted those measures.

In these circumstances, the offer to Compton was the only remaining impediment to the con-

* Memoires de Montgon, tome 4. p. 401. 403.

† Etough. From Horace Walpole, Period V.

‡ Duke of Newcastle to Mr. Robinson and the earl of Waldegrave. Correspondence. Montgon mentions the conference between Fleury and Horace Walpole, and asserts that cardinal Fleury also wrote a letter to the king of England; but no mention is made of it in either Fleury's letter to Horace Walpole, or in the king's letter to Fleury. See a further account of this transaction in Memoirs of Lord Walpole, chap. 15. Memoires de Montgon.

tinuance of Walpole. The manner of surmounting this difficulty was previously concerted. The queen having, in the presence of Walpole, repeated to Compton the intimation that the king intended to place him at the head of the treasury; Walpole instantly declared his ready acquiescence, and gave assurances of his best assistance and support. Compton was extremely affected at this instance of his master's kindness, and shed tears, as he declared his incapacity to undertake so arduous a trust.*

While this scene was passing in the closet, the door of Sir Spencer Compton's house in St. James's Square was besieged by persons of all ranks, who crowded to pay their court to the new minister. As Walpole was passing through the square in his carriage, he said to a friend who was with him, "Did you observe how my house is deserted, and how that door is crowded with carriages? To-morrow the scene will be changed: that house will be deserted, and mine will be more frequented than ever."

As his continuance in office was the work of the queen, it was through her that it was first made known to the public. On the first drawing-room which she held at Leicester House, lady Walpole, among others, presented herself; but as there was a great crowd, and her husband was supposed to have received his dismission, no one retired, till the queen perceiving her at some distance, beckoned to her, and said, "There

* Communicated by Sir Robert Walpole to bishop Weston. Etough Papers.

I am sure I see a friend;" instantly the whole company made way. She approached the queen, and kissed her hand. Her majesty spoke to her in a most gracious manner, and lady Walpole, in relating the anecdote to her son,* from whom I received it, added, "and in returning I might have walked upon their heads, so eager were they to pay their court to me."

From this moment Walpole was courted, Compton in his turn deserted, and the ministry, with very few alterations, continued in their former offices. On the 24th of June, the very day in which Swift said the ministry would be changed, Walpole was re-appointed first lord commissioner of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, and lord Townshend again received the seal of secretary of state. An attempt was finally made by the party,† through Mrs. Howard, to prevail on the king to confer an earldom on lord Bathurst; but that measure being thwarted by the influence of the queen, they relinquished all hopes of success, and Bolingbroke retired from London in disgust.

Queen Caroline possessed great art in bending the king's mind to the purposes which his English minister thought advantageous and necessary, and, in counteracting the Hanoverian cabals. She always affected to retire when the minister came into the closet, declared she did not understand business, and only remained as if to obey the king's commands, not out of inclination or curiosity. She never appeared to

*. From Lord Orford. † Ibid.

listen; never gave her opinion unless solicited, and then delivered it with a modesty and humility which captivated and charmed the king. She was extremely fond of power, though she affected the contrary, and preserved her influence over the king by consummate discretion. A friend to peace, she enforced the pacific system of Sir Robert Walpole, as the only means of preserving internal tranquillity, and preventing a rebellion; as the great cause of the national prosperity, the increase of commerce, and the improvement of manufactures and agriculture.

The interposition of queen Caroline, and the assistance which she gave to the ministry, in regulating the conduct of affairs, was of the highest advantage both to them and the country. Not unacquainted with the constitution of England, she often prepared and smoothed the way towards obtaining the king's consent to measures which he had first opposed, because they often ran counter to his German prejudices, or to his passion for military glory.

From the time of his accession, to the hour of her death, the king always appointed her, during his absence, regent of the kingdom; and an act of parliament was passed for the express purpose of exempting her from taking the oaths. He uniformly expressed as much satisfaction, when the affairs of government were conducted by her, as when conducted by himself; an honourable testimony of his confidence, which she amply merited by her good sense and discretion. The reliance which George the Second placed

on the queen, is evidently proved by some expressions in a letter from Da Cunha, the Portuguese minister at the Hague, to Azevedo in London: "As to your journey to Hanover, I have already given my opinion; it is certain neither the king will do any thing without the queen, nor the queen without the king: and therefore, in point of dispatch of business, London is Hanover, and Hanover is London." *

* July 9d 1736. Orford Papers.

CHAPTER 33.

1727—1729.

Walpole obtains an Increase of the Civil List, and a Jointure of £. 100,000 for Queen Caroline—Meeting and Proceedings of the New Parliament—State of the Opposition—Important Discussion on the State of the Sinking Fund and National Debt—Report of the House of Commons on that Subject—The King refuses to make Charles Stanhope a Lord of the Admiralty—Foreign Affairs—Transactions with Spain and the Emperor—Alliance with Brunswick—Act of the Pardo—Congress of Soissons—Treaty of Seville—Walpole promotes the re-establishment of Peace.

IN consequence of the re-appointment of the two ministers, not a single member of the cabinet council was removed, except the earl of Berkley, first lord of the admiralty, who was replaced by Sir George Byng, viscount Torrington, the confidential friend of Walpole; and his power was increased by the nomination of his friends to subordinate offices in the treasury, admiralty, and other boards of government. The wisdom of continuing the administration, was proved by the unanimity with which affairs were at first conducted in parliament; and the accession of George the Second, which the Jacobites abroad and at home had impatiently expected as the signal of a new revolution, took place with perfect tranquillity. They founded their principal hopes on the removal of the minister. The se-

cretary of lord Orrery, had observed to the exiled bishop of Rochester, that if the project to destroy Sir Robert Walpole was successful, he had more hopes of seeing the Chevalier restored, to the satisfaction of himself and subjects, than from any Alberoni or foreign assistance in the world. Atterbury himself also acknowledged that the king knew his interest too well to encourage any attempts against the minister.* The general despondency which they now testified, was equal to the ardour of their former expectations, and sufficiently proves that he was considered as the great support of the protestant succession, and the bulwark of the religion and constitution.

The opposition seems to have been stunned with the re-appointment of the minister, whose disgrace they had fondly anticipated, and the business was carried through the house of commons almost with perfect unanimity. The 15th of June, the day after the arrival of the express, with official intelligence of the death of George the First, the parliament assembled in conformity to the act of settlement, and was prorogued by commission to the 27th. On that day, the king came to the house of peers, and in his speech from the throne, after expressing his concern for the death of his father, his determination to preserve the constitution inviolable, and to secure to all his subjects the full enjoyment of their religious and civil rights, he gave his full

* Secret Intelligence from Paris, September 24th, 1727.—Walpole Papers.

sanction to the late measures. The address of condolence and congratulation, moved by Sir Paul Methuen, and seconded by Walpole, was carried without opposition. It was drawn up in such terms, as sufficiently proved that he thought himself secure of all the influence and power which he had hitherto possessed.* On the 3d of July, he proposed that the entire revenue of the civil list, which produced about £.130,000 more than the £.700,000 granted to the late king, might be settled on his majesty during life. Although this motion was considered as the price of his continuance in office; yet no one ventured to oppose it, except Shippen, who after a long speech, moved, that no more than £.700,000 should be settled; but as he was not seconded, the original motion passed without a division.† On the 9th, in consequence of a message requesting the house to settle a jointure on the queen, if she should survive the king; it was unanimously agreed, that

* Journals.—Tindal, vol. 20. p. 4.—Historical Register, 172.—Chandler.

† It is a curious observation of Smollett (vol. 2. p. 131), which must tend to show with how much partiality and inaccuracy he compiled his history. That "to these particulars (namely, in the speech of Shippen) which were indeed *unanswerable*, no reply was made. Even this mark of decency was laid aside, as idle and *superfluous*." The fact was, that no reply was made, not because the arguments were unanswerable, but because no one seconded the motion; a circumstance of which Smollett takes no notice. Belsham also observes (vol. 1. p. 172), with no less inaccuracy, "The amendment was rejected *with a great majority*," which would lead the reader to suppose, that there was a division. But in fact, there was no amendment duly moved and seconded, and the original motion, of course, passed unanimously.

£.100,000 should be granted for that purpose. On the 17th, the king made a speech from the throne, in which, after thanking the parliament for this mark of attachment and affection, he gave another and a stronger sanction to the conduct of the ministers, and adverted to the flourishing state of the country. The parliament was then prorogued to the 29th of August, and soon afterwards dissolved. Thus was this short session conducted with an unanimity and zeal unexampled in the annals of this country.

As the same men were continued in office, of course the same measures were pursued both at home and abroad. At home, to continue the public tranquillity, to counteract the schemes of the Jacobites, to promote commerce, to encourage agriculture and manufactures, were the great efforts of administration, and in these Walpole took an active and leading part. The new house of Commons, which assembled on the 23d of January 1728, was of the same temper and disposition as the last; and the members in favour of administration were soon found to exceed the complement in the former parliament. Sir Spencer Compton, who had occupied the chair, having been created a peer, Arthur Onslow was elected speaker, with an unanimity which could only be inspired by an opinion of his integrity and abilities; an opinion which his subsequent conduct fully justified, by an able and impartial discharge of his duty, during a period of thirty-seven years.* The speech from

* Tindal.

the throne was remarkable for an appearance of frankness and sincerity. The king first alluded to the uncertain situation of affairs abroad, to the difficulties which had attended the execution of the preliminaries with Spain, and to the unavoidable necessity of not discontinuing warlike preparations. After the ordinary professions of frugality, and willingness to reduce the national expenses, he exhorted the commons to take into consideration the encouragement of seamen in general, that they might be invited rather than compelled to enter into the service of their country, a consideration, he observed, worthy of the representatives of a people, great and flourishing in trade and navigation. To this purpose, he proposed an addition to the fund of Greenwich hospital, and concluded with recommending unanimity, zeal, and dispatch.

This speech was heard with general satisfaction. The address passed the lords without opposition; being presented to the commons for their approbation, Shippen proposed, with a view to cast a reflection on the ministers, after the words *disagreeable and uncertain state of affairs*, to add, *at his majesty's accession to the throne.* He then took occasion to launch out into the most bitter invectives, and particularly taxed the squadron sent to the West Indies, as useless and insignificant, for not having rifled the galleons at Carthagena, and plundered Porto Bello. Sir William Wyndham seconded the motion with his usual energy, and observed, that the languid measures adopted by government, tended only

to remove the negotiations from Paris and Madrid to Cambray, and would not assist in obviating the difficulties into which this dilatory mode of proceeding had plunged the nation. But these declamatory objections did not accord with the temper of the house; they rather excited so much indignation among the independent members, that the opposition did not venture to call for a division, and the address was carried unanimously. In fact, this conduct of opposition, not only displeased the nation, but even hurt their cause in the only court, where it was likely to have any effect. For the great objection which cardinal Fleury had raised against the counsels of England, was derived from their precipitancy and violence; and Bolingbroke had laboured to impress this notion on his partisans. The ministers availed themselves of this circumstance, and in conformity to their instructions,* earl Waldegrave, who in the absence of Horace Walpole, conducted the affairs of England at Paris, represented with due effect to the cardinal, that the same measures to which he objected, as too prompt and decisive, were reprobated in England, as deficient in spirit and energy.*

The first question which met with much opposition, was that made by Horace Walpole on the 14th of February, that £230,923 should be granted for maintaining 12,000 Hessians in the British pay. In the debate on this motion, the

* George Tilson to the earl of Waldegrave, February 2d and 5th, 1727-8. Waldegrave Papers.

minority seem to have first recovered from their surprise; the Pulteneys and Sir William Wyndham spoke with great weight and art on a question which has been so often discussed, and which still continues to agitate the public mind, concerning the expediency of taking foreign troops into British pay. The argument in favour of the question was, in substance, that the late king had thought fit to provide these troops, to obtain the ends of the treaty of Hanover; that they were ready at hand, and much cheaper than raising national troops; that a disappointment, from the defection of the king of Prussia, one of the contracting parties in the alliance, was a special reason for retaining them; that time had manifested this to have been a prudential measure, as it had prevented a war in Germany; that the reasons for taking them into pay still subsisted, and therefore their continuance was necessary till the intended congress at Cambray was finished: 84 divided against 280.*

At this period, Walpole, confiding on the support of queen Caroline, took the lead in the administration, and became in reality the first minister, although lord Townshend still ostensibly retained the name. The opposition also began to form itself into consistency, and to compose a firm and compact phalanx, which resisted all efforts to divide them. Until the death of George the First, the component parts of this heterogeneous body, which consisted of a few disappointed Whigs, Tories, and Jacobites,

* Journals. Chandler.

did not cordially coalesce. Many of those Whigs and moderate Tories, who looked up to that event as a prelude to their own admission into the ministry, kept aloof from those who, as being professed Jacobites, or violent Tories, could not expect the same success. But the continuance of Walpole in office having annihilated their hopes, the whole body became compact and united. In this respect, the Whigs became Tories, the Tories Whigs; and the Jacobites assumed every shape which tended to promote their views, by distressing government, and harassing the minister, whom they considered as the great supporter of the house of Brunswick.

The chief aim of Walpole was, to comprehend almost all the Tories as enemies to the government, by the name of Jacobites, or at least to give that stigma to every one who was not a profest and known Whig. With this view, his own administration being naturally supported on a Whig foundation, he endeavoured to attach to himself all those who had been dependent on Sunderland. With some he succeeded, but not with all; and of those whom he could not gain, several remained in their employments, because they were protected by the Hanover junta. This body of Whigs, small, but of considerable eminence, remained his enemies to the time of the king's death, watching for every opportunity to ruin him; and from the accession of George the Second, commenced the opposition which became afterwards so troublesome and formid-

able.* Pulteney was the great leader of this body; under him were ranged his kinsman Daniel Pulteney, Sir John Barnard, Sandys, and afterwards lord Polwarth, Pitt, Littleton, and the Grenvilles. Sir William Wyndham was the chief of the Tories, and William Shippen was at the head of the Jacobites, who did not form less than fifty members. Those who supported the minister were lord Hervey, whose character and talents have been scandalously depreciated by Pope, Henry Pelham, Sir William Yonge, whom Johnson calls the best speaker in the house of commons, Winnington, and his brother Horace Walpole, whose talents for negotiation, indefatigable assiduity in business, and acquaintance with foreign transactions, rendered him an able co-adjutor.

During this session, a very important question on the state of the national debt, was brought before the house, in which the minister of finance was deeply engaged. In the debates which took place on this subject, the opposition had declaimed against the profuse expenditure of the public money. They declared, that although large supplies were annually voted, during the last reign, and the produce of the sinking fund had been applied to the discharge of the debt, during a period of almost uninterrupted tranquillity; yet the public burthens were *increased*, instead of being diminished. They likewise observed, that should the war

* For the characters of the leading members of opposition, see Onslow's Remarks, Correspondence, Period IV.

with Spain continue, and new troubles arise in Europe, fresh taxes must be perpetuated to the latest posterity, and the nation inevitably sink under such an accumulated load.

In proof of these arguments, Pulteney had published a well written pamphlet, "On the State of the National Debt." Many similar statements had appeared in the Craftsman, attempting to show, that the sinking fund had been of no service to the purpose for which it was originally intended. Walpole knew that this position was defended by the most able pens, and ostentatiously supported by laborious calculations, which the people could not comprehend. As these assertions raised great clamours at home, and had a considerable effect abroad, in decrying the credit of the nation, it became necessary to confute, or at least to contradict them, in the same positive manner in which they were advanced. With this view, the minister determined, through the medium of the house of commons, to make a solemn appeal to the nation against their statements; and his resolution was unwittingly forwarded by opposition, who did not know that in repeating their attacks, they supplied him with the very weapons of defence, which he could not so easily have acquired without their concurrence.

In laying before the commons an account of the sinking fund, on the 22d of February, Walpole declared, that since 1716, it had discharged above six millions of the debt; but that as new debts had been contracted, the national burthens

had upon the balance been diminished about two millions and a half. Pulteney in reply asserted, that notwithstanding the great merit which some persons had arrogated to themselves from the establishment of the sinking fund, it appeared that the debt had *increased*, instead of being diminished, since the commencement of that pompous project. To this Sir Nathaniel Gould an eminent merchant, observed, that he apprehended the gentleman had taken this notion from a treatise, intituled, "The State of the National Debt;" that if he understood any thing, it was numbers, and that he would stake his credit, to show the fallacy of the author's calculations and inferences. Pulteney defended his calculations, and added, that he would prove his assertions in a few days, and would also stake his reputation on their truth. The minister supported the opinion of Sir Nathaniel Gould, and observed he would also stake his reputation on the truth of what he advanced.* Walpole now exerted himself in preparing specific statements of the produce of the sinking fund, of the debts which had been liquidated, and of those which had been contracted since its establishment, with a view of submitting them to parliament on the first opportunity, which was soon supplied by the leading member of opposition.

On the 29th of February, the king's answer was given to an address, requesting a specific

* George Tilson to the earl of Waldegrave, February 22d, 1727-8. Correspondence.—Chandler.

account of £.250,000 which had been charged for secret services. He trusted the house would repose the same confidence in him as they had reposed in his royal father; and declared, that a specific account of the disbursements could not be given, without manifest prejudice to the public. This message had no sooner been delivered by Sir Paul Methuen, comptroller of the household, than Pulteney rose. With great animation he inveighed against such a vague and general way of accounting for the public money, as tending to render parliament insignificant and useless, to cover embezzlements, and to screen corrupt and rapacious ministers. He again urged the increase of the national debt, and insisted on having that important affair debated in a grand committee. The minister opposed the immediate discussion of the question, but moved to adjourn the debate only to the 4th of March, when after the examination of the revenue officers, he should be ready to lay before the house, the state of the national debt. This motion was carried by 202 against 66.*

Accordingly, on the 4th of March, the commons, in a committee of the whole house, considered the state of the national debt, and examined at the bar the proper officers of the revenue. At the conclusion of this examination, with a view to avoid all general cavils, and to reduce the assertions of the adversaries to a specific account, a motion was made by the friends

* Journals.

of the minister, "That the monies already applied towards discharging the national debts incurred before Christmas 1716, together with £.220,435, which will be issued at Lady Day 1728, amount to £.6,648,762."

In reply to this proposition, the minority argued, that for the purpose of swelling the amount of the sums said to be issued for the liquidation of the debt, the minister had put down no less than three millions, which had been advanced in 1720, to make the irredeemables redeemables; and which could not properly be called a payment of debts. They also insisted, that he had omitted several large sums, particularly one million raised upon the credit of the civil list, and deficiencies of the land tax, malt, and other funds. They concluded, that these defalcations from the sums paid, and additions to the standing debts, would reduce the £.6,648,762, which, according to the boasts of the minister, was supposed to be liquidated, to less than one third.

Walpole on the other hand, maintained with no less positiveness the accuracy of his own statements, expatiated on the state of the nation, and of the public debts, explained the operation and efficacy of the sinking fund, and supported the motion. The opposition then proposed that the speaker should resume the chair; but this being negatived by 250 against 97, the original question was put, and carried without a division.

The minister having obtained this victory, re-

solved to bring forward his public appeal to the nation, by presenting a report from the house of commons to the king, stating, in certain resolutions, the amount of the national debt, and the sums which had been liquidated by means of the sinking fund. With this view, four resolutions were submitted to a committee of the whole house, on the 8th of March; the first of which repeated, in the same words, the motion made on the 4th, that £. 6,648,762 had been discharged.

The opposition, recollecting their former defeat by a large majority, and seeing that the house wholly differed from their representations, did not lay their wonted stress on the main question, but again loudly called for an account of the sum lately employed in secret service. To these clamours Walpole made the usual reply; it had been expended in negotiations too delicate to be specified. In the midst of his speech, an account was transmitted by lord Townshend, that the convention with Spain was signed at the Pardo.* Walpole availed himself of this information; and acquainting the house with the news, added, "The nation will be now relieved from the burthen of the late expenses, and I can assure the members who called so loudly for a specification of the secret service money, that it has been expended in obtaining the conclusion of that peace, the preliminaries of which are now signed. Thus the designs of those," added he, "who have laboured to disturb

* See the conclusion of this chapter.

the tranquillity of Europe, are defeated; while the purchase of peace, and the prevention of war, on terms so cheap, are highly beneficial to the public." This information spread general satisfaction through the house; the question was instantaneously called for, and the resolutions passed without a division.* On the 8th of April, these resolutions were formed into a report, which was drawn up by the minister, and laid before the house, to be presented to the king.

It is a very elaborate performance,† and deserves the strictest attention. After laying down the subject of the Report, which was, to examine how much of the additional debt incurred before the 25th of December 1716 had been discharged, and what new debts had been contracted since that time; it proceeds with making severe reflections against the arts practised to mislead the people in this important inquiry, "by publishing and promoting, with the greatest industry, most notorious misrepresentations of the true state of our debts, and of the provisions made for the discharge of them; and by infusing groundless jealousies, as if the produce of the sinking fund had been but little and inconsiderable, or that by wrong and imprudent measures, bad economy, neglect, or mismanagement, unnecessary expenses had been

* Lettre de Monsieur Le Coq, au Roi de Pologne, de Londres 23 Mars, 1728. Also a letter from a foreign minister, dated $\frac{13}{24}$ March, 1728. De la Faye to earl Waldegrave, March $\frac{11}{22}$, 172$\frac{8}{9}$. Correspondence, Period III.

† Tindal, vol. 20. p. 24.

incurred, and new debts contracted, which not only equalled, but exceeded, by several millions, the amount of the old debts that had been discharged."* It then adopts a method that is plain, easy, and intelligible to the meanest capacity, by giving, in two tables, the amounts of the debts discharged and incurred, since the 25th of December 1716, just before the establishment of the sinking fund:

Debts incurred since December 25th 1716, and since discharged - -	6,626,404	16	$9\frac{1}{2}$
Debts contracted and incurred since December 25th, 1716, and now subsisting - - - - -	3,927,988	7	$1\frac{3}{4}$
Difference, or decrease of the national debt -	2,698,416	9	$7\frac{3}{4}$

It then gives the new debts, under the proper heads of the services for which they were contracted; and after having related the beginning, establishment, and beneficial effects of the sinking fund, observes, that by reducing the interest of the greater part of the debts from 6 to 4 per cent. there is a saving of one third of the interest, which is equal to a discharge of one third of the principal. And as the annual produce of the fund was gradually raised from £.400,000 to £. 1,200,000 the addition of £. 800,000, if

* Journals.

valued at twenty-five years purchase, the current price of annuities, would give a real profit to the public of £.20,000,000.

It concludes by saying, "This is the happy state of the sinking fund, taken separately, and by itself. But, if we cast our eyes upon the state of our public credit in general, it must be an additional satisfaction to us, that by preserving the public faith inviolable, by the discharge of the old exchequer bills, and the reduction of the high interest on all our standing debts, the whole credit that is taken on the annual funds, for carrying on the current service of the year, is and may be supplied for the future at £. 3 per cent. or less; for interest, premium, and charges, by exchequer bills, just as the occasions of the public require, without loans, or without incurring obligations, for money to be advanced or lent on the credit of them. And so far is the public from being under the former necessities of allowing extravagant interest, premiums, or discounts, for any money they want, the only contest now among the creditors of the public is, that every one of them desires to be the last in course of payment."

"Permit us then, most gracious sovereign, to congratulate your majesty on the comfortable prospect we have now before us, if notwithstanding the many difficulties this nation has laboured under since the happy accession of your majesty's late royal father to the throne, notwithstanding the unnatural rebellion which soon after broke out, and the many heinous plots

and conspiracies, which have since been formed and carried on, for overturning the religion and liberties of our country, and the protestant succession in your most illustrious family; the many disturbances which have arisen, and the uncertain and embroiled condition of the affairs of Europe, not a little fomented and encouraged by the false intelligence, and malicious insinuations, which have been industriously spread abroad by your majesty's and our enemies, of the uneasy and perplexed state of our affairs at home, as if that had rendered it almost impossible for this nation, effectually to exert themselves in defence of their own just rights and possessions, and for establishing and securing the public peace and tranquillity; if, notwithstanding these and many other difficulties which we laboured under, while the sinking fund was yet in its infancy, and so much less than it now is, we have been able to diminish the national debts so much already, what may we not hope for in regard to a more speedy and sensible discharge of them for the future, now the sinking fund is so greatly increased, and our public credit in so flourishing a condition."*

Such was the substance of this remarkable report, which was carried by 243 against 77.† It was presented to the king, and drew a favourable answer, on the 11th of April, expressing his extreme satisfaction at the removal of groundless jealousies and apprehensions, at the happy effects to be expected from the flourishing state

* Journals. † Ibid.

of public credit, and at the provision made for the gradual discharge of the national debt. He concluded by observing, "You may be assured, it shall be my particular care and study to maintain and preserve the public credit, to improve the sinking fund, and to avoid all occasions of laying any new burthens upon the people."*

The effects of the report, both at home and abroad, were incalculably beneficial to the credit of the minister. Whatever were the opinions of individuals, whatever might be the cavils of those who opposed government, the statement of the minister was approved by more than *two thirds of the national representatives, assembled in parliament, and was solemnly sanctioned by the king.* At home the discontents visibly subsided; abroad the national credit was established on stronger grounds than ever. It was proved, in opposition to the clamours of the disaffected, that the kingdom could support the expenses of a war. France courted our alliance with redoubled ardour; Spain was confirmed in her wishes for peace; the Emperor and Russia shrunk from a contest with Great Britain; the dispatches from Paris, Seville, and Vienna, sufficiently announced the weight and influence which the counsels of England had gained by the opinion, which now generally prevailed in favour of her finances.

In this session occurred one of those difficult and critical cases, in which Walpole was reduced to the necessity of complying with the

* Journals.

will of the sovereign, contrary to his own judgment, or of resigning. Great Complaints had been made of the deficiency of the civil list, and upon an examination of the revenue officers, a motion was made by Scrope, secretary to the treasury, on the 23rd of April, that the sum of £. 115,000 be granted to his majesty, not as a deficiency, but as an arrear. It appeared that there was no deficiency; yet the house rejected a motion for a secret committee, and passed the act, by a majority of 241 against 115. In the lords, the bill met with strenuous opposition, and though carried, very strong protests were entered on the Journals, and signed by fourteen peers. This transaction gave great pain to Walpole. He is said to have used every effort of address and reasoning to dissuade the prosecution of the demand, so much as even to offend the king. The enemies of his administration were not ignorant of his resistance; and some of the leading Tories made secret proposals to the king, that if he would discard Walpole, they would not only obtain the sum required, but add to it £. 100,000. Thus circumstanced, the minister reluctantly complied, and subjected his character to much obloquy. *

This inflexibility of George the Second exposed Walpole not only to many difficulties in his public career, but to many unmerited reproaches in his character, as a man of veracity. Great embarrassment must occur to a minister from the occasional reluctance of the sovereign

* Journals. Chandler. Tindal. Etough's Papers.

to confirm the promises made to individuals of particular offices, either of honour or trust; and on such occasions, he is naturally subjected to the blame of indifference, negligence, or duplicity. Thus he had not been able to obtain for his friend the duke of Devonshire the presidentship of the council, which high office was, by the interposition of Sunderland, conferred on lord Carleton,* who, since his elevation to the peerage, had seldom voted with the Whigs.

But perhaps no failure affected him more, or caused more reproaches, than the refusal of the sovereign to make Charles Stanhope, elder brother of the earl of Harrington, a lord of the admiralty. The real cause of the king's non-compliance, arose from his aversion to Charles Stanhope, which was disclosed to the minister, under the strictest injunctions of secrecy. George the Second had found among his father's papers and letters, a memorial from lord Sunderland, written in the hand of Charles Stanhope, expressive of strong dislike to his son, and recommending the adoption of the most violent measures against him. The perusal of this paper excited the highest indignation as well against the memory of lord Sunderland, as against the secretary who had written it. In regard to Charles Stanhope, the king declared, that no consideration should induce him to assign to him any place of trust or honour; and he kept his word. For when Sir Robert Walpole espoused his interest with much ardour, he offended the king, who rejected the appli-

cation, with some expressions of resentment against the minister for having recommended him.*

When George the First left England, things wore the appearance of a general pacification. In virtue of the preliminaries signed by the Imperial and Spanish embassadors, a courier from Spain was hourly expected to announce, that the siege of Gibraltar was raised, and the prizes restored. But the death of the king put a momentary suspension to these hopes.

Philip received the preliminaries on the 10th of June, and before he issued orders in conformity with his promises, the news of that event arrived. The accession of the new sovereign had been announced by the Jacobites abroad, as likely to meet with numerous obstacles; and at all events, it was supposed that the helm of government would not be directed by so steady a hand, when Townshend and Walpole were removed. Under these impressions, Philip, was inspired with the hopes of breaking the strict alliance between France and England, and of again engaging the Emperor in his support; while he therefore affected to agree to the terms accepted by his embassador, he delayed, under various pretences, to raise the siege of Gibraltar, and restore the Prince Frederic, a ship belonging to the South Sea Company, which had been seized under the pretence of carrying on a contraband trade.

* Lord Townshend to Stephen Poyntz, June 3d, 1728. Correspondence, Period IV.

The Emperor justified this conduct, by declaring, that the king of Spain was not obliged by the preliminaries to take those steps; and by his preparations, gave unequivocal signs of intentions hostile to England. The only method, therefore, of bringing Philip to reason was, to attack his ally in Germany, and to pursue such vigorous measures as might deter the court of Vienna from supporting Spain, by invading the electorate and the United Provinces, the only parts in which the allies of Hanover were vulnerable, and which the English would be bound in honour to defend. This measure was still more necessary; because the conventions made by the Emperor with the electors and princes of the empire, and the subsidies which he was to pay with Spanish money, in virtue of those conventions, were not expired. The allies were, by the management of the courts of Vienna and Madrid, in the same state of uncertainty as to peace or war, as before the preliminaries were signed.

Among all these conventions made by the Emperor, none had a more fatal tendency than that with Brunswick Wolfenbuttel. The Emperor had already drawn the electors of Mentz, Cologne, Treves, and Bavaria, and the Elector Palatine, into his interest. His near consanguinity to the prince of Saxony, seemed to secure to him, at least, the neutrality of that protestant electorate; and he had found means to draw off the king of Prussia, by the promise of guarantying to him the succession of Berg

and Ravenstein. In case of a rupture, he had secured Mentz as a place of arms, which gave to him the command of Suabia, Franconia, and the Rhine.

The Elector of Mentz had already permitted him to put a garrison into Erfurt, which, by its situation, made him in effect master of Upper Saxony. But still Lower Saxony, in which circle the dominions of Hanover are situated, remained inaccessible, till he found means to make a treaty with the duke of Brunswic Wolfenbuttel, by which he was to grant that prince a subsidy of 200,000 florins a year. In a secret article it was farther stipulated, that the conjuncture of affairs requiring it, closer engagements should be entered into between them, as well for augmenting the duke's subsidies and troops, as in relation to the town of Brunswic. In consequence of this convention, another subsidiary treaty was opened between the court of Russia and the duke, under the influence and direction of the Emperor. Had he been permitted to garrison Brunswic, not only a fatal disunion would have been produced between the branches of the king's family, but the situation of that place would have enabled the Emperor to pour into the electorate his own troops, as well as the 30,000 men which by the treaty with Russia, were to have been introduced into the empire, under pretence of recovering Sleswick for the duke of Holstein. The greater part of Westphalia would have been laid under contribution, even to the frontiers of

Holland; and the kings of Denmark and Sweden would have been kept in awe, by being forced to provide for the safety of their own possessions on the side of Germany.

In this dangerous situation of affairs, when the king's German dominions, and through them the United Provinces, were threatened by the combined arms of Austria, Russia, and Prussia; and when the possession of Brunswic, as a place of arms for the allies of Vienna, would have enabled the Emperor to penetrate into Lower Saxony, and bring on a general war, a treaty was concluded with the duke of Brunswic Wolfenbuttel, which put an instant check to the views of the Emperor, and to the hopes of Spain. This treaty, negotiated between lord Townshend and count Dehn, the confidential minister of the duke of Brunswic, was signed at Wolfenbuttel, on the 23d of November 1727. It stipulated a renewal of the family compact, according to the treaty of the 6th of May 1661, by which Brunswic was to be kept for the common safety of the house of Lunenburg, and not consigned to any other power; a mutual guaranty of dominions; mutual assistance in case of attack; a subsidy of £.25,000 a year, during four years, to the duke of Brunswic, who was to furnish at least 5,000 men. This treaty, if considered in its general effects and tendency to the pacification of Germany, was a master-piece of policy. It united the two branches of the house of Lunenburg, who had been long at variance; and by preventing the progress of the Imperial

arms, saved the electorate of Hanover from hostile inroads.

These prudent and vigorous measures had the effect for which they were designed. The Emperor was reduced to a state of inaction; while Spain, unable to maintain an unequal contest with the allies of Hanover, submitted with reluctance, and ratified the preliminaries of peace at the Pardo, a royal palace near Madrid, in conformity to a declaration settled between Horace Walpole and cardinal Fleury, and made by count Rothembourg, the French minister in Spain. In consequence of this act, the congress of Soissons was held, where the plenipotentiaries of all the powers concerned in the late troubles were assembled; and although nothing material was transacted, yet the negotiations were so managed, on the part of the Hanover allies, as to create a division between the courts of Vienna and Madrid. The project of a provisional treaty, negotiated between the Imperial, British, and French plenipotentiaries, had so alarmed the king of Spain, and created so much uneasiness in the queen, that they required from the Emperor a positive declaration on the subject of marrying the two archduchesses to the two Infants of Spain, and his refusal to explain himself, excited their resentment to such a degree, as to give England and France an opportunity of detaching them from the Emperor.

The breach being now made, a reconciliation speedily took place between the allies of Hanover and Spain. Philip sacrificed the Emperor,

as the Emperor, by declining to co-operate in the siege of Gibraltar, had sacrificed him, signed the preliminaries at Pardo, and concluded, at Seville, the 29th of November, 1729, with Great Britain and France, a treaty of peace, union, and mutual defence. This treaty, besides the restoration of peace, and the renewal of all former treaties between Great Britain and Spain, stipulated the introduction of six thousand Spaniards, instead of neutral troops, as specified by the quadruple alliance, into Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia, for securing to Don Carlos the eventual succession to those duchies, should the reigning sovereigns die without issue male; and if the Emperor would not acquiesce, forcible means were to be used for effectuating the introduction.

In return for this single article granted to Spain, Great Britain obtained immediate redress of some grievances, the promise of redress in others, new guaranties of all her possessions, and rights of trade, and a tacit exclusion of any claim to Gibraltar, upon which to be silent, after the clamorous demands made by Spain, was the same as a public renunciation.*

Although Walpole suffered the negotiations to be ostensibly managed by Townshend, and seemed to take no part in the various trans-

* The contents of the part of this chapter which relates to foreign affairs, have been principally drawn from the various dispatches of Horace Walpole and William Stanhope, in the Walpole and Stanhope Papers, and from the state of the negotiation, from June 1728 to June 1730, drawn up by Mr. Robinson, the minister at Vienna, in the Grantham Papers.

actions; yet he watched with a jealous eye the progress of the business. In the secret correspondence which he constantly held with his brother Horace, whose opinion had a great influence over Townshend, he directed all his advice and views to the final establishment of peace. He was on the one hand studious not to offend the Emperor beyond hopes of recovery, who he well knew, in case of a reconciliation between France and Spain, could alone in future prevent the aggrandizement of the house of Bourbon. On the other, he was equally anxious to facilitate an accommodation with Spain, for the sake of restoring the British commerce, which had received a deep blow from the recent rupture. The treaty of Seville, was indeed principally owing to his interference or directions; and Townshend's repugnance to this plan of pacification, was overruled by the prudence and discretion of his colleague.

CHAPTER 34.

1727—1729.

Debates in Parliament on a supposed Promise of George the First to restore Gibraltar to Spain—Mistakes generally entertained on that Subject—True State of Facts—Conduct of the Regent of France—Of the King and Queen of Spain, and its Consequences.

IN the midst of these transactions, an outcry was raised against administration, for having degraded the king, and disgraced the nation, by breaking a promise made to Philip the Fifth, for the restitution of Gibraltar, which, it was urged, had induced that monarch to accede to the quadruple alliance; and therefore the war was unjust on the part of England, because he only claimed his right, in virtue of that promise, and offered to commence a negotiation for peace, when it was fulfilled. To these assertions, Walpole replied; "the promise having been given when he was not in administration, he was in no respect answerable for it; but if it had ever been made, he durst aver it was conditional, and rendered void by the refusal of Spain to comply with the terms on which it was founded, and whenever the performance of that agreement was mentioned to him, he had always maintained that Gibraltar should not be granted

without the consent of parliament."* On the 6th of February, 1727, when Sandys moved, "for addressing the king to communicate to this house, copies of the declaration, letter, or engagement, on which the king of Spain founded his peremptory demand for the restitution of that fortress," he was seconded, and strenuously supported by Sir William Wyndham, Hungerford, and Pulteney, who took notice of a letter written in 1721, to one of the Emperor's plenipotentiaries at Cambray, wherein a promise of ceding Gibraltar was expressly mentioned. They were opposed by Henry Pelham, Brodrick, Horace Walpole, and Sir Robert Walpole, who said, that the communication of the declaration or letter was altogether impracticable and unprecedented; the private letters of princes being almost as sacred as their very persons.†

But although this remark at that time imposed a respectful silence on the house of commons; yet the question was again revived in the upper house, on the 18th of March, and the letter being produced, some of the lords in opposition moved the resolution, "That effectual care be taken, in the treaty then in agitation, that the king of Spain do renounce all claims and pretensions to Gibraltar and Minorca, in plain and strong terms." But the motion being overruled, another was carried, "That the house relies upon the king for preserving the undoubted right to Gibraltar and Minorca." This resolution being sent down to the commons on

* Chandler. † Ibid. vol. 6. p. 384.

the 21st of March, lord Malpas proposed and carried an address for a copy of the letter to the king of Spain; which being laid before the house, a warm debate ensued. Many severe reflections were levelled at those who advised the king to write such a letter, as implied, or at least was considered by the Spaniards as signifying a positive promise of giving up Gibraltar, and was therefore the principal occasion of the king of Spain's resentment, and of the difficulties in promoting a pacification. To these insinuations, Walpole replied as on the former occasion, and added; "the letter did not contain any positive promise; and effectual care had been taken in the present negotiation to secure the possession of Gibraltar." But the party in opposition declaring themselves dissatisfied with this explanation and answer, moved an addition to the resolution of the lords, that all pretensions on the part of Spain to Gibraltar and Minorca, should be specifically given up; but the question being negatived by a large majority of 156 voices, the resolution of the lords was carried without a division. Thus ended this business in parliament, which had created so much ill-will, occasioned so many false reports at the time, and which has since been misrepresented by those who inculpate the minister for breaking a promise which he never made, and for violating the national honour, when, in fact, he defended and supported it.

Although the business was thus concluded in parliament; yet the assertions of the minister

did not satisfy opposition, and as the affair was again renewed in the Craftsman, and other periodical publications, with increased rancour and exaggerated invective, to which Walpole never condescended to make any reply, these invectives have been adopted by subsequent historians with no less asperity, and considered as authentic facts. Nor is this misrepresentation confined to the authors of this country. Many of the French writers are totally mistaken in the account of this negotiation, in asserting, that George the First promised unconditionally to restore Gibraltar.

Anquetil, for instance, presumes, that in the peace which Spain concluded with France and England in 1720, there was a secret article by which the *king of England promised to restore Gibraltar to Spain;* and he grounds this presumption, not unfairly, on the two following passages from the Memoirs of Villars. March 10, 1727: The pope's nuncio at Madrid, wrote to the nuncio in France, that the king of Spain offered to agree to the suspension of the trade from Ostend, and at the same time demanded Gibraltar, *insisting that the restitution of it had been promised by the king of England.* November 2, 1727: Count Rothembourg, the French embassador at Madrid, relates, that the queen of Spain complained of the English, and speaking of Gibraltar, took out an original letter from the king's cabinet, *in which George the First promised the restitution of Gibraltar.** As there-

* Vol. 2. p. 411. See also Belsham's History, vol. 1. p. 251.

fore the accounts given of this transaction are in general erroneous, and as the inquiry itself is not uninteresting, I shall give a narrative of the negotiations relative to this restitution of Gibraltar, drawn from authentic documents.

In 1715, George the First, for the purpose of avoiding a rupture with Spain, gave full powers to the regent, duke of Orleans, to offer the restoration of Gibraltar. The hostilities which followed, annulled the promise, and afterwards the king of Spain acceded purely and simply to the quadruple alliance, without stipulating the cession. The regent, however, with a view to ingratiate himself with the king of Spain, and promote the double marriage between the two infants and his two daughters, repeatedly renewed the offer in the name of George the First, and inspired Philip with the most sanguine hopes of recovering so important a fortress. These expectations being urged by Philip with great warmth, and with little discretion, obliged the king to declare that he did not consider himself as bound by his former conditional promise. The regent when reproached by the queen of Spain with a breach of his word, dispatched the count de Saneterre to England, to represent the danger and delicacy of his situation. He declared, that he considered the king's promise as full and positive, and that he would as soon consent to his utter ruin, as to the dishonour of failing in so public an engagement. These strong expressions from the regent, who had proved himself so faithful an ally, and whose

assistance in discovering and counteracting the schemes of the Jacobites was so necessary, perplexed the king, and induced him to use his utmost endeavours to gratify him and the king of Spain. With this view, earl Stanhope sounded the disposition of the upper house, by insinuating an intention to obtain a bill, empowering the king to dispose of Gibraltar, for the advantage of the nation. But this hint produced a violent ferment. The public were roused with indignation by the simple suspicion, that at the close of a successful war, unjustly begun by Spain, so important a fortress should be ceded. General murmurs were at the same time excited by a report, industriously circulated by opposition, that the king had entered into a positive engagement for that purpose; virulent pamphlets were published to alarm the people, and persuade them rather to continue the war, than to yield Gibraltar. The ministers were compelled to follow the torrent, and to adopt the prudent resolution of waiving the motion, lest it should produce a contrary effect, by a bill, which might for ever tie up the king's hands.* The interference of France in this affair, and the extreme eagerness of the regent to obtain the restitution, was of great detriment. The alarm was indeed so strong, that suspicions were entertained lest he was meditating the desertion of the alliance with England, and made Gibraltar a pretext to justify a change of

* Earl Stanhope to Sir Luke Schaub, Paris, March 28, 1720. Hardwicke Papers.

system. These apprehensions induced the king to send earl Stanhope to Paris, for the purpose of representing the true situation of affairs, and stating the unpopularity of the measure, and the impracticability of carrying it against the general sense of the people. The letter which Stanhope conveyed from the king to the regent on this occasion, dated March 9th, 1720, was firm, discreet, and satisfactory. He acknowledged that he had made the offer of ceding Gibraltar, solely with a view of preventing the rupture, and that Spain might have obtained it, had she then acceded to the proposed conditions. But it was now too late to revive the demand, as the king of Spain had proved himself the aggressor. It never could be understood that a voluntary offer of this nature, to prevent a war, was binding as a preliminary of peace. He concluded by observing, that he had never given his consent since the rupture, to the renewal of the offer, and had received no communication from the regent of any intention to bring it forward.* The duke of Orleans was fully satisfied with this representation. He owned, that although he could not avoid continuing to press for the restitution which he had so solemnly promised in the king's name; yet that he would employ every indirect means in his power, to prevent its being indiscreetly and improperly urged, and testified his resolution to make a separate peace with Spain.

* The king to the duke of Orleans. Walpole Papers.

The king, however, being still inclined to gratify the regent, if he could do it without disobliging his subjects, referred the object of dispute to the congress at Cambray, hoping that in the course of negotiations, the Spanish plenipotentiaries might urge such motives and arguments in its favour, as would influence the parliament and people.* Under the same impressions, he made another effort. By his order, earl Stanhope on the 1st of October, 1720, wrote to secretary Craggs, to lay before the lords justices the advantages which would result from ceding Gibraltar for Florida, or the eastern part of St. Domingo, and for certain commercial advantages. This proposal being submitted to the council, lord Townshend at first warmly opposed it, but finally assented if a suitable equivalent, particularly Florida, could be obtained. Accordingly, the cession seemed ultimately determined, if it met with the approbation of parliament. But the obstinacy of the king of Spain, rendered this proposal ineffectual. He declined yielding Florida in exchange, and insisted on Gibraltar without an equivalent.† This claim on his part was so warmly and repeatedly urged, as the indispensable requisite for acceding to the terms of pacification, that it was deemed a prudent act of policy not to retard the conclusion of peace, by a positive denial. Philip having requested,

* Sir Luke Schaub to Grimaldo, Madrid, June 17, 1720. Hardwicke Papers.

† Secretary Craggs to earl Stanhope, August 2 and 26, 1720. Stanhope Papers. Earl Stanhope to Secretary Craggs, Hanover, October 1, 1720. Hardwicke Papers.

as an ostensible vindication of the peace, which was reprobated in Spain as highly dishonourable, a letter conveying a promise of restoring Gibraltar, George the First complied, and on the 29th of April, 1721, expressed himself with great discretion on this delicate subject. "I no longer balance (he observed) to assure your majesty of my readiness to satisfy you with regard to your demand, touching the restitution of Gibraltar, *upon the footing of an equivalent*, promising you to make use of the first favourable opportunity to regulate this article, with consent of my parliament." When the British minister delivered this letter, both the king and queen of Spain made so many objections, particularly to the word equivalent, that at his suggestion the king consented to write another letter, June 1, in which those words were omitted, under the full conviction that the letter, even in that mutilated state, left the affair entirely to the parliament, who might refuse to part with Gibraltar upon any terms; or if they agreed to the cession, might equally insist upon an equivalent.*

This was the memorable letter,† which was the cause of so much obloquy. Philip considered it as a positive promise, and his minister insisted upon a pure and simple restitution, without any equivalent. The king of England, on the contrary, asserted that the cession must

* Dispatch from William Stanhope to lord Carteret, Aranjuez, May 29, 1721. Hardwicke Papers.

† This letter is printed in the Journals of the lords and commons, in the Political State of Europe, Historical Register, Chandler, and Tindal, with an omission of the words marked in Italics.

solely depend on the consent of parliament, which would not be easily obtained. In the midst of these claims on one side, and counter declarations on the other, which agitated the plenipotentiaries during two years, the dissolution of the marriage between Louis the Fifteenth and the Infanta, occasioned the rupture between France and Spain. Philip broke up the congress at Cambray without having agreed to the preliminaries, and the question of Gibraltar remained undecided. After ineffectually endeavouring to detach England from France, and whilst he was secretly preparing for a reconciliation with the house of Austria, he renewed his claims, and accompanied them with bitter reproaches.

In the midst of these altercations, Ripperda, having publicly declared at Vienna that England would be compelled to restore Gibraltar, colonel Stanhope was commanded to obtain an immediate acknowledgment from Madrid, whether this declaration of Ripperda was made by order, or simply on his own authority.* The king of Spain, and his first minister Grimaldo, both replied, that Ripperda had surpassed his orders, in saying that a rupture with England would ensue, unless Gibraltar was restored; and Stanhope was desired to acquaint his court with this declaration. Stanhope prepared his dispatch, and the courier was on the point of taking his departure, when he received a letter

* Letter from colonel Stanhope to lord Townshend, July 14, 1725.

from Grimaldo, informing him that the continuation of the friendship and commerce between England and Spain, would depend on the speedy compliance with this demand. On inquiry, he found that the cause of this sudden change in opinion, proceeded from the ratification of the treaty of Vienna. In fact, both the king and queen of Spain were so little acquainted with the constitution and temper of the English nation, that they insisted on an *immediate* restitution of Gibraltar as the only means of avoiding a rupture. Against this extraordinary demand, Stanhope remonstrated in an audience with the king and queen of Spain. He declared, that they insisted upon an impossibility, since what they required could not be effected without consent of parliament; whereas there was then no parliament assembled, nor could possibly be assembled, before the king's return to England in the spring. "No!" said the queen, "Let then the king your master return presently into England, and call a parliament expressly for this purpose, it being no more than what we might expect from his friendship for us; and I am assuredly and positively informed, that the matter once fairly proposed, would not meet with one negative in either house. Let this short argument be once used; either give up Gibraltar, or your trade to the Indies and Spain; and the matter, I will answer for it, won't admit of a moment's debate."*

* Letter from W. Stanhope to lord Townshend, August 6, 1725. Stanhope and Harrington Papers.

The consequence of this insolent and peremptory demand being a refusal on the part of England, Philip commenced the siege of Gibraltar, and alleged as an excuse for the aggression, the breach of promise on the side of George the First. When the desertion of the Emperor compelled him to accept the preliminaries of peace, he clogged the negotiation by renewing his claims on Gibraltar; and furnished the opposition in England with matter of reproach to the minister, who justified himself in parliament. The object of Philip was to bring the dispute before the congress of Soissons; that of the English plenipotentiaries to prevent it. The prudent manner in which they succeeded in that design, does honour to their diplomatic abilities; and the treaty of Seville was, as I have already observed, concluded without any stipulation or mention of Gibraltar.

CHAPTER 35.

1728.

Rise, Disgrace, Imprisonment, Escape, and Arrival of Ripperda in England—Reception and Conferences with the Ministers—Dissatisfaction and Departure—Enters into the Service of the Emperor of Morocco.

THE arrival of the duke of Ripperda in England, his clandestine reception, and temporary concealment under the protection of Townshend and Walpole, form a remarkable event in this year. The papers committed to my inspection, contain several curious particulars of this extraordinary man, who negotiated the treaty of Vienna, and afterwards betrayed the secret articles to the court of London.

William, baron and duke of Ripperda, was descended from a noble family in the lordship of Groningen, one of the United Provinces; he received a learned education, and acquired an intimate knowledge of the French, Spanish, and Latin languages. He served as colonel during the war of the Spanish succession. In the midst of his military occupations, he applied himself with indefatigable industry to the study of trade and manufactures; and being no less distinguished for his insinuating address, was deputed, in 1715, soon after the peace of Utrecht,

envoy to Madrid, for the purpose of settling the commercial disputes between Spain and the Dutch republic. While he was labouring to adjust that difficult business, he contributed to promote the conclusion of a commercial treaty between Spain and England, for which service Townshend commends his good offices in terms of high approbation.*

During his residence at Madrid, his ardent imagination, consummate address, and extreme facility in writing dispatches and drawing memorials in various languages, recommended him to cardinal Alberoni, who employed him in affairs of a most secret and delicate nature. The services which he performed, and the grateful acknowledgments of the minister, inspired him with sanguine hopes of obtaining a splendid situation in a country where, since the accession of a foreign king, aliens had been frequently promoted to the highest offices of government; and as Alberoni alleged as an excuse that he could not be promoted on account of his religion, he made a public abjuration, and was admitted into the Roman Catholic church. He was then appointed superintendant of a cloth manufactory, recently established, by his own suggestion, at Guadalaxara, and received the grant of a pension and an estate. During this period of his life, he was pensioned by the Emperor, and seems to have received occasional presents from the English court. He was so unprincipled, that he had even the assurance to

* Townshend Papers.

call upon our envoy Mr. Bubb, for 14,000 pistoles, in the name of cardinal Alberoni, which he appropriated to his own use,* and this transaction probably contributed to his disgrace. Having brought the manufactory to a high degree of improvement, and enjoying frequent opportunities of conversing with the king and queen, he excited the jealousy of Alberoni, and was removed from the superintendance. Ripperda, however, dissembled his resentment. While he still continued in public on terms of amity with the prime minister, he secretly represented to Daubenton and Grimaldo, who were disgusted with Alberoni, many errors and instances of mal-administration, which the confessor laid before the king, and persuaded him to consult Grimaldo, through the channel of the postmaster-general.

In the course of the difficult and complicated transactions in which Spain was involved with the Emperor, France, and England, the opinion of Ripperda was also demanded. He accordingly drew up a report, in which he declared, that the king would never succeed in his designs against the Emperor, unless he could obstruct the operations of England. With this view, he recommended the troops destined to invade Sicily, to be landed, with great stores of arms and ammunition, on the coasts of Scotland or Ireland, in favour of the Pretender. If his restoration should take place, the prince would in gratitude relinquish Gibraltar, Minorca, Ja-

* Stanhope's Dispatches. Harrington Papers.

maica, and all the American settlements wrested from Spain by the English, and the Italian provinces would be easily recovered. This advice, though rejected by the influence of Alberoni, who persevered in the reduction of Sicily, made a deep impression on the king's mind, and gave him a favourable opinion of Ripperda's genius and spirit, which was increased, when the repeated predictions of Ripperda, that the rash and ill-concerted measures of Alberoni would fail, were verified by the event. The disgrace of the cardinal being the consequence of his ill-success, the superintendance of the manufactures at Guadalaxara was restored to Ripperda, and his influence over the king and queen promoted by the strong recommendations which the duchess of Parma, at the suggestion of the Imperial court, made in his favour, to her daughter the queen of Spain, and by the orders given to marquis Scotti, the minister of Parma at Madrid, to serve as a channel of communication between him and the queen. Hence Ripperda obtained private audiences of the king and queen of Spain, in which he laid down plans for the improvement of trade, and the increase of the marine; flattered the queen with promoting the aggrandisement of her family; and still more ingratiated himself in her favour, by proposing the marriage of Don Carlos with an archduchess.

Depending on her protection, he aimed at the ministry of state, of the marine and the Indies; he had even disposed the king to re-

move the ministers, when Scotti betrayed the secret to Daubenton and Grimaldo. Daubenton prevented the immediate appointment of Ripperda, by representing the danger and impropriety of entrusting the administration to a new convert; and when the death of Daubenton, and the offer of a cardinal's hat to the new confessor, father Bermudas, seemed likely to facilitate his elevation, his expectations were annihilated by the abdication of Philip. During the short reign of Louis, the queen maintained a private correspondence with Ripperda, and followed his advice, in sending large sums of money and her jewels to Parma.

Soon after Philip's resumption of the crown, when the cabinet of Madrid formed a project of reconciliation with the Emperor, Ripperda was selected as the fittest person to carry that delicate negotiation into execution. He was accordingly deputed to Vienna, with secret instructions to make a peace with the Emperor, to conclude a marriage between Don Ferdinand and the second archduchess, and to secure, on the death of the Emperor without issue male, the Italian provinces and the Netherlands to Spain, with the reversion of Tuscany and Parma to Don Carlos. Before his departure, he delivered a project for preparing a fleet of 100 ships, an army of 100,000 infantry, and 30,000 horse. The expenses he proposed to discharge from the revenues of the Indies alone, by new modelling the trade to the settlements, and securing the profits, which were almost absorbed by the

English and French nations, and the Spanish ministers. He also undertook to save an annual sum of 10,000,000 crowns; and obtained from the king a promise, that on his return from Vienna, he should be appointed prime minister to carry his project into execution.

Ripperda performed the object of his mission with great address. He departed from Spain in the latter end of October, and arrived at Vienna in November, where he resided in the suburbs, under the fictitious name of baron Pfaffenberg. It does not appear that the English court had any notice of his arrival from St. Saphorin, their agent at Vienna, before the 18th of February; when he received intelligence from Petkum, minister of the duke of Holstein, that a Dutchman, the description of whose person answered to that of Ripperda, held long and secret conferences with count Zinzendorf by night. This man was soon discovered to be Ripperda; yet all the information which St. Saphorin could procure concerning the object of his mission, amounted to no more than a conjecture, that a marriage between an archduchess and an infant of Spain, was the subject of their conferences; but whether with the prince of Asturias or Don Carlos, was a matter of which he was wholly ignorant.

Ripperda was anxious to finish his mission, that he might return to Spain, and obtain those honours which awaited him. But with a view to render the queen of Spain more tractable, he changed his instructions, and proposed that the

eldest archduchess should be given to her son, Don Carlos, and that Mademoiselle de Beaujolois, who had been affianced to him, should be transferred to the prince of Asturias. The queen instantly approved and promoted a plan so congenial to her wishes, by which the imperial dignity, and the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria, would devolve on her issue. Having thus secured the queen, he gained the court of Vienna, by affirming, that if he was placed at the helm of government in Spain, a saving would be made of 50,000,000 crowns, out of which five or six millions should be annually remitted to Vienna. He accordingly received a verbal, if not a written promise, from count Zinzendorf, in the name of the Emperor, that the eldest archduchess should be affianced to Don Carlos.

While this business was in agitation, the dissolution of the marriage between the infanta and Louis the Fifteenth, and the refusal of England to accept the sole mediation, excited the resentment of the king and queen of Spain to such a degree, that instant orders were transmitted to Vienna, for concluding a treaty on any terms. Ripperda found no difficulty from the Emperor.

Under these auspices, Ripperda concluded the treaty of Vienna; the news of which, on reaching Madrid, inspired the king and queen with the most extravagant joy, and the populace, delighted at their deliverance from French interference, shouted, "Long live the august

house of Austria."* Count Konigseg, deputed embassador to Madrid, was received with the most flattering marks of esteem and consideration, and soon acquired such an ascendancy, as to govern the councils of Spain.

The secrecy with which the whole negotiation was conducted, was so well maintained, that the contents of the treaty, which was signed on the 21st of May, were scarcely suspected, until they were hinted at by the Emperor himself, who could not contain his joy on the occasion; and then divulged by the Imperial ministers, with a view to insult and intimidate the cabinet of England. The veil of secrecy being removed, Ripperda came forth in the public character of embassador from Spain. The splendour of his household, the liberality of his donations, and the punctuality of his payments, attracted esteem and secured popularity. He at the same time displayed the natural warmth and presumption of his temper. He poured forth, in public companies, the most bitter invectives against England, and made repeated declarations, that a refusal to yield Gibraltar, or to guaranty the engagements recently concerted between the two contracting powers, would be followed by an immediate attempt to assist the Pretender.

Ripperda quitted Vienna in the beginning of November, 1725. He passed through Italy, and taking ship at Genoa, disembarked at Barcelona. On landing there, he gave to the officers of the

* Count Staremberg to the Emperor, June 8, 1725. Harrington Papers.

garrison, who crowded to pay their respects, an ample account of the transactions at Vienna, declaring that the Emperor had 150,000 troops ready to march at an hour's warning,* and that as many more could be brought into the field in six months. He spoke contemptuously of France, threatened the Hanoverian allies, should they presume to oppose the designs of the Emperor and Philip; declared that France should be pillaged, the king of Prussia crushed in one campaign, and George the First deprived of his German territories by the Emperor, and of his British dominions, by the Pretender. At the conclusion of these rodomontades, he continued his journey without delay, and rode post to Madrid, where he arrived on the 11th of December, in the afternoon. After a short interview with his wife, he repaired to the palace without changing his dress, and went to the anti-chamber. Applying to the lord in waiting for admission, he was informed that Grimaldo, the secretary of state, was with the king and queen of Spain, and that he could not be immediately admitted. He expressed, in terms of derision, his impatience and surprise that Grimaldo continued so long, and on his coming from the cabinet took no notice of him, but desired the lord in waiting to announce his arrival.

He was instantly admitted, and received with the highest marks of kindness and satisfaction.† The conference was long; and on the following

* W. Stanhope to lord Townshend, December 27.
† Memoires de Montgon, tome i. p. 207, 208.

day he was nominated minister and secretary of state, in the room of Grimaldo. All the other ministers, counsels, and foreign embassadors were ordered to transact business with him; and without the name of prime minister, he was invested with the same uncontrolled authority as had been enjoyed by Alberoni. But he possessed more turbulence, self-sufficiency, and haughtiness than the cardinal, without his address, resources, and incorruptible integrity; and the British embassador, who knew his character well, observed, that, without the spirit of prophecy, "One might foresee ten Alberonis in this Ripperda, as Scylla did ten Mariuses in Julius Cæsar."

It soon appeared that Ripperda possessed neither address or abilities sufficient to carry his gigantic schemes into execution; and the king, irritated by the disappointment of his sanguine hopes, as well as angry at being the dupe of this superficial pretender, repeatedly told the queen, Ripperda was a madman, and must be removed.

Swoln with vanity and presumption, he seemed, however, to defy all opposition. "I know," he said, "that the Spanish ministers and nation are irritated against me, but I laugh at their attempts. The queen, to whom I have rendered the most essential services, will protect me." And another time he exclaimed at a public levee, that he was shielded by six friends who would defend him against all intrigues, God, the Blessed Virgin, the emperor and empress,

the king and queen of Spain.* But although Ripperda owed his elevation to the union he had formed between the courts of Vienna and Madrid, and appears, from this expression, to have perfectly understood, that his continuance in power could only be secured by supporting that system; yet such was his caprice or vanity, that soon after his establishment, he began to deviate from the line of conduct by which he had attained it. He relaxed in his attentions to count Konigseg, and was suspected of endeavouring to form an union with the ambassadors of Great Britain and Holland. This conduct rendered Konigseg his enemy; the incapacity of the minister became daily more apparent, and his vain-glorious boasting, produced nothing but contempt and derision from the statesmen of every nation.

In these circumstances, Don Joseph and Louis de Patino, secured the protection of the queen, by the private recommendation of her confessor, Don Domingo de Guerra, who represented them as persons highly qualified to direct the helm of government, and well inclined to support the plans of Ripperda, as far as they related to the aggrandisement of Don Carlos. They also gained the interest of count Konigseg by offers of supplying the imperial court with the promised subsidies. Both the queen and Konigseg now suffered the king's resentment against Ripperda to break out; they no longer counteracted the cabals of the Spanish ministers, nor con-

* Memoires de Montgon, tome i, p. 210.

cealed the clamours of the nation against an upstart, a new convert, and a foreigner.

Ripperda at length perceiving that he was detested by the people, thwarted by the Spanish ministers, opposed by Konigseg, despised by the king, and declining in the favour of the queen, paid great court to the British and Dutch embassadors, and made the most humble professions of respect and duty to the king of England. In the midst of these continued apprehensions and alarms, he was dismissed from the superintendance of the finances, under the pretence of delivering him from part of the burthen of government. Foreseeing that this would be speedily followed by the loss of all his employments, he requested the king's permission to retire from his service. But his demand was not complied with, and he continued to transact business till the 14th of May, when he received a letter from the marquis de la Paz, that the king accepted his resignation, and conferred on him a pension of 3,000 pistoles. The general satisfaction which this event diffused, and the tumultuous acclamations of the populace, who assembled in large bodies before his house, filled him with apprehensions of being massacred; and after writing a submissive letter to the king, he took refuge in the hotel of the British embassador, who was with the court at Aranjuez.

Returning to Madrid, the evening of the 15th, Stanhope had a difficult part to act. It was of the greatest importance to obtain from Ripperda a communication of the secrets of the

Spanish cabinet, and particularly an account of the negotiations which were then transacting between the courts of Vienna and Madrid; and yet be careful not to offend the king of Spain, by appearing to countenance a discarded minister, in opposition to the will of the sovereign. The caution and prudence with which he conducted himself on this delicate occasion, reflect honour on his judgment, and contributed greatly to his future elevation. He contrived to give protection to the ex-minister, and detain him in his house, until he had extorted all the secrets which he was willing or able to communicate.

Ripperda now betrayed to him the secret articles of the treaty of Vienna, and probably exaggerated the designs of the Emperor and the king of Spain, with a view to ingratiate himself with the king of England, and to exasperate the nation against those two monarchs who had occasioned his disgrace. He, who in the height of his power was so giddy and presumptuous, was now become so abject, that his whole frame shook with agitation, he appeared to be in the greatest agonies, and wept like a child.

For the purpose of conveying the intelligence communicated by Ripperda, which was of too much importance to be sent by the post, or even to be entrusted in a dispatch, by a common courier, Keene, then consul general, afterwards embassador in Spain, was dispatched to England. After communicating in person, the secret with which he was entrusted to the duke

of Newcastle and the other ministers of state, he drew up, by order of the king, a letter to the duke of Newcastle, containing the substance of Ripperda's conversation, which is inserted in the correspondence.*

After a negotiation of a few days, between the Spanish court and the British embassador, Ripperda was taken by force from his house, and transferred to the castle of Segovia. From hence he made his escape, after a confinement of fifteen months.

The governor of the castle and his wife, being both infirm, could not pay constant attention to their prisoners, and the servant maid,† being seduced by the duke, contrived his escape, and effected it with the assistance of a corporal, who was one of the guards; while his faithful valet, with unexampled attachment, remained in his apartment, and for some time prevented intrusion, by declaring that his master was indisposed.‡ The duke had just recovered from a severe fit of the gout, and not without the greatest difficulty descended the ladder of ropes which was let down from the window of his apartment, and repaired to the place where a mule and a guide waited for him. Unable to continue riding, he gave

* See Period IV. Article, Ripperda.

† Campbell, in his Memoirs of the duke of Ripperda, has converted the servant maid into the daughter of a Castilian nobleman, and the antiquated wife of the governor, into a sprightly and beautiful young woman.

‡ See letter from Keene to the duke of Newcastle, giving an account of Ripperda's escape.—Correspondence, Article, Ripperda.

his mule to the guide, and hired a carriage, but proceeded so slowly that he employed five days in travelling to a small village on the frontiers of Portugal, where he remained until he was joined by his two confidants. With them he arrived at Miranda de Douro, the first town in Portugal, and from thence continued to Oporto, where he embarked for England, on board the Charity, under the name of Don Manuel de Mendosa.*

The vessel was forced by contrary winds into Cork, and in the beginning of October, he landed at Comb-martin, in Devonshire, with the young woman, the corporal, and a servant, and passed a few days at Exeter. Townshend and Walpole, apprised of his arrival and departure from Exeter, dispatched Corbiere, under secretary of state, to meet him on the western road, who conveyed him in a coach-and-four to Eton, where he was lodged incognito, in an apartment belonging to Dr. Bland, dean of Durham, and head master of the school. There he was met by lord Townshend, who received him with the greatest marks of attention, with a view to obtain from him fuller and more accurate information concerning the secret articles of the treaty of Vienna. Having resided a few days at Eton, he departed with the same secrecy to London, where he arrived on the 13th. After continuing for some time incognito, he took a large house in Soho Square, and a villa, and lived in a mag-

* Memoires de Montgon. Political State of Great Britain.

nificent style. During his residence in England, he maintained an occasional correspondence with Walpole, and having made a rapid proficiency in the English language, conceived the chimerical hope of filling some high department in administration. While the differences with Spain were under discussion, and a possibility of rupture with that country continued, the ministers maintained an amicable intercourse with Ripperda, which probably fed his delusion, and inflamed his ambition. But when the conclusion of the treaty of Seville, contrary to his views and remonstrances, rendered his information no longer useful, he felt the pain of disappointed self-importance, and in the year 1731, withdrew in disgust to Holland.

Animated by a spirit of vengeance against Spain, which he could not satisfy among the powers of Europe, he embarked for Barbary, at the instigation of the embassador from Morocco, entered into the service of the emperor Muley Abdallah, embraced the Mahometan religion, was created a bashaw, obtained the command of the army and the office of prime minister; and gained the entire confidence of the emperor. After several successes over the Spaniards, and defeating a competitor for the throne of Morocco, in which he gave signs of great courage and skill, he was worsted near Ceuta, and preserved his life, by resigning his command. He deserted Muley Abdallah, when dethroned by Muley Ali, and finally retired to Tetuan, where

he lived under the protection of the bashaw, and died in 1737, at a very advanced age.*

Cawthorn, in his poem on the Vanity of Human Enjoyments, has well delineated the capricious and motley character of Ripperda:

O pause, lest virtue every guard resign,
And the sad fate of Ripperda be thine.
This glorious wretch indulged at once to move
A nation's wonder and a monarch's love;
Blest with each charm politer courts admire,
The grace to soften, and the soul to fire,
Forsook his native bogs with proud disdain,
And, though a Dutchman, rose the pride of Spain.
This hour the pageant waves the Imperial rod,
All Philip's empire trembling at his nod;
The next disgrac'd, he flies to Britain's isle,
And courts the sunshine of a Walpole's smile.
Unheard, despised, to southern climes he steers,
And shines again at Sallé and Algiers;
Bids pale Morocco all his schemes adore,
And pours her thunder on th' Hesperian shore:
All nature's ties, all virtue's creeds belied,
Each church abandon'd, and each God denied;
Without a friend his sepulchre to shield,
His carcase from the vultures of the field,
He dies, of all ambition's sons the worst,
By Afric hated, and by Europe curst.

* This account of Ripperda is principally drawn from the dispatches of St. Saphorin at Vienna, of William Stanhope at Madrid, and from "An Account of Ripperda," by two Sicilian abbots, in the Walpole Papers.

CHAPTER 36.

1730.

Coalition of the Tories and discontented Whigs—Sanguine Hopes of Opposition that Walpole would be removed—Their Efforts in Parliament—Debates on the Imperial Loan—on the Pension Bill—on Dunkirk—and the Renewal of the East India Company's Charter—Arrangement of the Ministry on the Resignation of Lord Townshend—Characters of the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Harrington.

ALTHOUGH the Tories had hitherto joined the discontented Whigs in their attacks against the minister, yet the coalition had never been hearty and sincere. They formed a separate body; and as they did not amount to less than one hundred and ten members, they considered themselves, both from superior numbers, and weight as country gentlemen, entitled rather to give than receive an impulse from the other parts of the minority. They did not therefore choose to pay that regular attendance in parliament, which a constant and uniform warfare required from all those who, however differing in many points, were united in that of distressing the minister. But in the session which opened in 1730, a regular and systematic plan was formed by Bolingbroke, and carried into execution by means of his address and activity. His connexion with Pulteney, as the joint manager

of the Craftsman, gave him an influence over the Whigs; and his intimacy with Sir William Wyndham, secured to him the acquiescence of the Tories. He had persuaded the whole body, that notwithstanding the signature of the convention at Pardo, a peace with Spain still met with insuperable difficulties. That Philip had not relinquished his demand of Gibraltar; that the Spanish depredations would still continue to be committed with impunity; that the British commerce with Spain would either be suspended or annihilated. Measures were therefore concerted to call the ministers to account for their supineness and pusillanimity. The clamours thus excited, extremely popular in a nation jealous of its honour, and anxious to secure its commercial advantages, occasioned great discontents, as well amongst the friends as the enemies of the minister.

Although the conclusion of the treaty of Seville, which was highly favourable to the commercial interests of England, and honourable to her national glory, disconcerted opposition, and overset the schemes of Bolingbroke in this particular, yet he was too able not to form another plan of attack. Having effected a coalition between the discordant parties in the minority, and appointed a general muster in parliament, he still continued to animate the mass with fresh spirit. His labours were now turned to sow discord among the Hanoverian allies, to avail himself of a growing misunderstanding which had recently appeared between England

and France, to encourage the emperor to persist in his refusal of admitting Spanish garrisons into Parma and Tuscany, and thus to counteract the execution of the treaty of Seville. Under his auspices, and by his direction, the opposition brought forwards many questions calculated to harass government, and to render themselves popular. The expectations formed by the disaffected were highly sanguine; and a notion prevailed both at home and abroad,* that the fall of the minister was unavoidable. Their hopes of success were founded on the disunion in the cabinet; on the supposed aversion of the king to Walpole, and on the disgust of those Whigs who adhered to Townshend.

The first trial of their strength was made in June 1730, on the question concerning the Imperial loan. The Emperor, by the treaty of Seville, having been deprived of liberal remittances from Spain, attempted to borrow £.400,000 in London. A bill was accordingly presented to the commons for preventing loans to foreign powers, without licence from the king under his privy seal. Had the ministry permitted the loan, they would have been abundantly and deservedly reproached. Advocates, however, against the prohibition were not wanting. The hardships of all restraints, the disadvantage to us, and the advantage to the Dutch, were specious pretences. Walpole took an active share in combating the arguments of opposition, and

* Secret Intelligence from Paris. Walpole Papers.

the question was carried.* A sufficient justification of the measure was, that the want of money compelled the court of Vienna to submit to terms of accommodation.

The most popular and plausible measure proposed by opposition was, the pension bill, which was now first introduced, and which from this period, became a never-failing topic of antiministerial attack, and ministerial defence. On the 16th of February, Sandys moved for leave to bring in a bill to disable all persons from sitting in parliament, who had any pension, or any office held in trust for them from the crown, directly or indirectly; and for the purpose of enforcing this exclusion, he proposed that every member, on taking his seat, should swear that he had not any pension, directly or indirectly, did not enjoy any gratuity or reward, or hold any office or place of trust; and that after having accepted the same, he would signify it to the house within fourteen days. Walpole, who knew the unpopularity of the arguments which could be urged against the bill, and appreciated the effect of those which would be brought in its favour, declined taking an active part against it, notwithstanding the express injunctions of the king,† who called it a villanous bill, and the disgust of Townshend, who was unwilling that the odium of its rejection should be cast upon the house of lords. He does not seem to

* Journals.

† Note from the king to lord Townshend. Correspondence.

have spoken in the debate, or to have exerted his usual influence; for while most of the questions supported or opposed by government, were passed or thrown out by a majority of more than two to one, the bill was only carried by 144 against 134.* It was negatived by the house of lords after a long debate,† and a protest entered by twenty-six peers. A similar fate attended it the next session; and during his whole administration, Sir Robert Walpole never made any strong opposition to it, but left it to be rejected by the upper house. It was now the generally received opinion, and not without foundation, that the minister suffered the pension bill to pass the house of commons, because he knew that it would be thrown out by the peers. Sandys, therefore, in the subsequent session, March 3, 1730, brought forward a motion for appointing a committee, to inquire whether any members had, directly or indirectly, enjoyed pensions, or offices from the crown, held in trust for them, in part, or in the whole. Walpole ventured to oppose it; he called it a motion for erecting the house into a court of inquisition, and urged, that it justified the treatment which the bill had experienced in the upper house. He declared that the act, if passed, could not answer the end for which it was proposed, unless the house should assume to itself a power unknown to the constitution, namely, a power of compelling every member that was suspected, to accuse himself, not of any thing criminal, for

* Journals. Tindal. † Lords' Debates. Tindal.

it could not be criminal, to take either place or pension from the crown, and in consequence of that construction, to dispossess half the counties and boroughs in England of their representatives. The arguments and influence of the minister prevailed, and the bill was thrown out, by 206 against 143.* Yet such was the unpopularity of the rejection, that many members, suspected of having pensions or places, held in trust, voted for it, lest their opposition might disoblige their constituents.

The stipulation to destroy the harbour of Dunkirk, made at the peace of Utrecht, and renewed in the treaty with France of 1717, had never been fully complied with. The French cabinet, always anxious to retain the use of a harbour, which, in case of a war with Great Britain, was situated so advantageously for the annoyance of our trade, continued clandestinely to prevent the demolition of the works. Frequent remonstrances were made by the English ministry, and promises extorted from the French cabinet, that the treaty should be carried into effect; but the inhabitants, either by the suggestion or connivance of their government, kept the harbour and works in a state of repair.

This was a subject which gave great uneasiness to the minister, on which he frequently expatiated in his letters to his brother, and even reproached him for neglecting to enforce the demolition. It was a point, however, of so much delicacy, that cardinal Fleury, though he

* Journals.

constantly avowed his readiness to accede to the demands of the British minister, yet always eluded them, probably not daring to irritate the people of France, by the enforcement of so disagreeable a command. The delays on this subject afforded to opposition a ground for insinuating the connivance of ministry with the court of France, to sanction the repairs of that harbour. Bolingbroke was well aware that nothing would more exasperate the public mind, than the persuasion that the French were employed in the reparation of that harbour; and if that fact could be proved, that the suspicion of conniving at it would fall upon the ministry. He was no less convinced, that it would weaken the credit of the minister abroad, if he could prove that France did not fulfil her engagements, and that a misunderstanding had arisen between the two kingdoms. To obtain evidence in support of these points, he sent his secretary, Brinsden, to inspect the state of the works at Dunkirk.

On the imperfect and exaggerated report of this agent, was founded a motion for an address, that "the king should direct that all orders, instructions, reports, and proceedings, had in regard to the port and harbour of Dunkirk, since its demolition, be laid before the house." The king having agreed to this address, the necessary documents were produced, which being read, and witnesses examined, Sir William Wyndham moved, that in what had been done relating to the harbour of Dunkirk, there was

a manifest violation of the treaties between the two crowns. But before he was seconded, the other side made a motion for an address of thanks to the king, "for his attention to the interests of the nation, in causing a proper application to be made to the court of France, not only for putting a stop to the works carrying on, but for demolishing such as had been made by the inhabitants of Dunkirk, for repairing the court and channel there; and to express their satisfaction in the good effects which his majesty's instances had had, by obtaining express orders from the most Christian king, for causing to be destroyed all the works that might have been erected at Dunkirk, contrary to the treaties of Utrecht and the Hague; and their reliance upon their being punctually executed; and further to declare their satisfaction in the firm union and mutual fidelity, which so happily subsisted, and were so strictly preserved between the two nations."*

This unexpected motion, which prevented the discussion of that proposed by Sir William Wyndham, occasioned a long and warm debate, in which Walpole seems to have particularly distinguished himself. The great object of opposition was, to draw over the Whigs, who usually supported government, and had lately wavered under the plausible notion that the conduct of the minister had been in this instance contrary to the principles and interests of their party. The object of the minister was,

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 71.

to prove to the Whigs, that their principles and interests were no ways affected by this controversy, and that it was simply a Tory question. With great art he introduced a personal application, and made a most vigorous attack on Bolingbroke, who was particularly obnoxious to the Whigs, at whose instigation he insinuated that this inquiry was made, and whose character and spirit of opposition he drew in the most unfavourable colours. Sir William Wyndham, provoked by the philippic against his friend, defended him with uncommon energy, and drew a comparison between him and Walpole, in which he attempted to show that Bolingbroke was by no means inferior in honesty and integrity to the minister. This comparison called up Henry Pelham, who ably seconded the attack against Bolingbroke, and excited such a general indignation among the Whigs, that the address was carried by 274 against 149.* The loss of this question by so large a majority, which the opposition expected to have carried triumphantly, increased the popularity of the minister, and his credit abroad. Horace Walpole, who took a considerable share in the debate, observes in a letter to Poyntz, this was the greatest day, both with respect to the thing itself, and the consequences, that had ever occurred within his memory, for the king and ministry, and must prove a thunder-bolt to their adversaries in England, as well as abroad, because it contradicted the assertions of oppo-

* See Journals.

sition, that the king and the Whigs were dissatisfied with his brother's administration.*

Another object of great national interest, brought forward by opposition was, to prevent the renewal of the charter of the East India company, which was near its expiration, and to form another incorporated society, without the exclusive privileges, which should grant licences, upon certain conditions, to all persons inclined to trade to the East Indies. The leading men in the minority, foreseeing that the company would apply to the legislature for the renewal of their charter, had secretly prevailed on many respectable merchants in the city to engage in the scheme. It had a popular tendency, from the general aversion which is always entertained against monopolies and exclusive privileges, by those who derive no immediate share from the emoluments; and was still farther recommended by the plausible pretence of easing the public burthens, by obtaining a large sum of money from the new incorporated society.

Having obtained information of their views, the minister laboured to counteract them. He was convinced that the trade could only be carried on by an exclusive company. The persons who were to form the new society, were wholly unacquainted with the secrets of the business; and unless the company could be induced to communicate information, and to part with the forts and settlements in the country, the trade

* Horace Walpole to lord Harrington and Stephen Poyntz. March 2, 1730. Correspondence.

might be reduced or annihilated. Having concerted his plan with a few of the directors, in whom he placed implicit confidence, and aware that the chief hopes of success conceived by opposition, were founded on the popular ground of obtaining sums of money for the use of the public, he anticipated their views, by insinuating to the house, that a part of his ways and means would be derived from the East India company. This unexpected turn surprised the minority, and wholly disconcerted their plan before it was brought to maturity. They had however proceeded so far in opening private subscriptions, and making engagements, that they could not recede.* A petition was therefore presented to the house by several merchants, traders, and others, offering to advance £.3,200,000 at five payments, before the 25th of May 1733, at an interest of 5 per cent. to redeem the fund and trade of the East India company; provided the lenders might be incorporated and vested with their whole trade; yet so as not to trade with their joint stock, or in a corporate capacity, but the trade be open to all his majesty's subjects, upon licence from such proposed new company, desiring the same, on proper terms and conditions; and provided the trade be exercised to and from the port of London only; and be subject to redemption at any time upon three years notice, after a term of thirty-one years, and repayment of the principal.

* Horace Walpole to lord Harrington, March 2. Correspondence.

After a long debate the petition was rejected by a majority of 223 against 188.*

The opposition, however, were not intimidated by the rejection of this proposal. They had been taken by surprise, and compelled, by the address of the minister, to bring it forward before it had been fully digested. They resolved therefore to introduce the business again, and employed the interval in publishing anonymous letters, essays in periodical papers, and pamphlets, against exclusive companies in general, and particularly against the East India company. All the arguments† which had ever been advanced against monopolies in this and other mercantile companies, were retailed on this occasion, and all the benefits which were supposed to result from a free trade, were magnified with great art and subtlety. The ministers and the East India company were not on their part silent; they likewise defended, with no less skill, the advantages of an united company, vested with exclusive privileges, and bound by peculiar regulations, under the control of the legislature. The petition was again presented to the house of commons, on the 9th of April, and rejected without a division. While it was depending, the minister brought in his bill, which prolonged the charter to 1766, on

* Journals.

† The reader will find the arguments, pro and con, in Anderson's History of Commerce, who has treated the question with great judgment. Vol. 3. p. 156—162.

the condition of paying £.200,000 towards the supply of the year, and of reducing the interest of the money advanced to the public, from £.160,000 to £.120,000, or one per cent. by which bargain, the nation was benefited to the amount of at least a million.

An act which passed this sessions, though trifling in itself, yet must not be omitted, as it formed part of those commercial regulations which the minister was endeavouring gradually to introduce, by taking off several restraints that shackled foreign commerce. It seems to have been the first deviation from a general principle, which had been established by the European nations who had dominions in America, to maintain an exclusive intercourse between the mother country and the colonies. The narrow spirit of this impolitic restriction, from which incredible advantages were supposed to result, but which in reality was productive of great inconveniences, did not escape the notice of the minister; and he suffered an exception to be made of rice, as a perishable commodity. An act accordingly was passed, for granting liberty to carry rice from Carolina directly to any part of Europe, south of Cape Finisterre, in British bottoms, navigated by British sailors.* In consequence of this beneficial act the plantations of rice were considerably increased in the province of Carolina. The good effects of this regulation induced the minister afterwards to extend the privilege to

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 76.

the colony of Georgia. And it is the observation of an eminent commercial writer, "that the consequence of both these well-judged laws has been, that the rice of the American plantations has been preferred to the rice of Verona and Egypt, which had before a general sale." *

The opposition moved in the course of the session for various papers, relating to foreign affairs. Of those they obtained, little use was made, except to furnish matter for the writers of pamphlets and essays in periodical papers. These publications now assumed such a tone of violence and audacity, as seems to have alarmed the minister, perhaps too much; for it induced him to make it one of the topics of animadversion in the speech from the throne which terminated the session.

On the 15th of May, the same day on which the house was prorogued, Townshend resigned. Lord Harrington was appointed secretary of state, Henry Pelham secretary at war, and the privy seal was given to the earl of Wilmington; on whose assistance opposition had relied with the most perfect security. Within a few months, he was created lord president of the council, which high office he held till the removal of Sir Robert Walpole.

The charge of foreign affairs now ostensibly devolved on the duke of Newcastle and lord Harrington, whose characters form a remarkable contrast, though they acted together with the utmost cordiality.

* Anderson's Origin of Commerce, vol. 3. p. 164.

Thomas Pelham Holles, duke of Newcastle, was son of Thomas lord Pelham, by Grace, sister of John Holles, duke of Newcastle. He was born in August 1693-4, and on the death of his father, in 1712, succeeded to the barony of Pelham. He inherited a large part of the great estate of his uncle, who had no issue male, and took the name of Holles. Being of a great Whig family, he strenuously promoted the succession of the Protestant line. Soon after the accession of George the First, he was created earl of Clare, and in 1715, duke of Newcastle. He supported the administration of his brother-in-law lord Townshend;* but on the schism of the Whig administration in 1717, he attached himself to Sunderland, by whose influence he was appointed lord chamberlain, and invested with the order of the garter. On the coalition which took place in 1720, between Sunderland and Townshend, he joined his former friend. During the struggle in the cabinet between Townshend and Walpole, on one side, and Carteret and Cadogan on the other, he uniformly attached himself to the brother ministers. His devotion to their cause was so warm, and his consequence as one of the great Whig leaders so highly appreciated, that he was solely admitted into their intimate confidence, and entrusted with the most secret transactions. In their private correspondence,

* The first wife of Charles viscount Townshend was Elizabeth, daughter of lord Pelham by his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Sir William Jones, attorney general to Charles the Second.

they invariably style him their good friend, and Townshend repeatedly desires Walpole to give information to the duke. In one place he expressly says, "When I desire you to communicate this to no one, I always except the duke of Newcastle;" and Walpole no less frequently assures his correspondent, that he has no reserve for their common friend. When it became necessary to remove Carteret from the office of secretary of state, Newcastle was selected as the fittest person to fill that station, which in consequence of the alliance with France, was a post of the highest delicacy and importance.

Newcastle was thirty when he was raised to this office, and as he succeeded Carteret, whose knowledge of foreign affairs, and talents for business were duly appreciated, his appointment to so important a trust was contemptuously spoken of, and the new secretary was considered as not capable of discharging the duties of his office. His outward appearance and manners, seemed to justify this observation. He was trifling and embarrassed in conversation, always eager, and in a hurry to transact business, yet without due method. He was unbounded in flattery to those above him, or whose interest he was desirous to conciliate, and highly gratified with the grossest adulation to himself. The facility with which he made and broke his promises, became almost proverbial. He was not sufficiently considerate to his secretaries and subordinate clerks, exacting from them a large sacrifice of time and labour;

and to his immediate dependants, he was fretful and capricious.

With these unfavourable appearances, he gave few symptoms of the talents which he undoubtedly possessed. In fact, he had much better abilities than are usually attributed to him. He had a quick comprehension; he was an useful and frequent debater in the house of peers; had an answer ready on all occasions, and spoke with great animation, though with little arrangement, and without grace or dignity. He wrote with uncommon facility, and with such fluency of words, that no one ever used a greater variety of expressions; and in his most confidential letters, written with such expedition as to be almost illegible, there is scarcely a single erasure or alteration.

His temper was peevish and capricious, and he was always jealous of those with whom he acted. Of this jealousy, Townshend occasionally complained in his private correspondence with Horace Walpole, and in one instance, he particularly observes, "This was my view in sending a *projet mitoyen*, but my dear friend the duke looks upon the thoughts of any body else as reflections upon his own; and instead of considering the use that may be made of what is suggested by another, looks upon it as a personal thing, and runs out into a long justification of his own performances, which nobody finds fault with."* Sir Robert Walpole also repeatedly insinuated to his

* Walpole Papers.

correspondents, not to omit writing confidentially to Newcastle, and exhorted them rather to neglect him than the duke, who would be grievously offended by the smallest omission. This jealousy, suppressed in some measure during his subordinate situation under lord Townshend, increased as he advanced in years, was highly troublesome to the minister of the house of commons, and created so much disgust, as to occasion frequent altercations.

George the Second had conceived a very early and violent antipathy to the duke of Newcastle, which was augmented by the discordancy of their tempers and habits, particularly by his deficiency in method and exactness, which the king considered as essential characteristics of a minister. The representations of Walpole, on the necessity of conciliating a man so powerful from family and party connexions, induced the king to moderate or conceal his repugnance; but his dislike broke out occasionally into bitter expressions of contempt and aversion. In one of these discontented moods, he said to a confidential person, "You see that I am compelled to take the duke of Newcastle to be my minister, who is not fit to be chamberlain in the smallest court of Germany."

With these habits, and this disposition, and under the necessity of struggling against the deep-rooted aversion of George the Second, it is a matter of surprise that he so long retained his power; for if we reckon from his first pro-

motion to the post of lord chamberlain, to his resignation at the commencement of the reign of George the Third, he continued to fill a high situation at court for a period of six and forty years. This long continuance in office was owing to his situation as the chief leader of the Whigs, to his princely fortune and profusion of expense, to the high integrity and disinterestedness of his character, and to the uniform support which he gave to the house of Brunswic.

As a subordinate minister, acting under superior influence, his zeal and activity were highly useful; and his want of order, and warmth of temper, were counteracted and modified by the method and prudence of Walpole. But when he was placed at the head of affairs, he became distracted with the multiplicity of business,* yet unwilling to divide it with others. Weakness of counsels, fluctuation of opinion, and deficiency of spirit marked his administration during an inglorious period of sixteen years; from which England did not recover, until the mediocrity of his ministerial talents, and the indecision of his character, were controlled by the ascendancy of Pitt.

His colleague in office, William Stanhope, (descended from Sir John Stanhope, brother of Philip, the first earl of Chesterfield) was third son of John Stanhope of Elvaston, in Derbyshire. Having received a learned education,

* Lord Hervey, in a letter to Horace Walpole, said of him, "that he did nothing in the same hurry and agitation, as if he did every thing." Correspondence, Period V.

he embraced the profession of arms; served in Spain under his kinsman James, afterwards earl Stanhope, and finally obtained, in 1715, a regiment of horse. He was chosen in the first parliament of the reign of George the First, for the town of Derby; and, in 1717, appointed envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the king of Spain. On the rupture between Spain and England in 1718, he was named envoy and plenipotentiary to the court of Turin. In May 1721 he served as a volunteer in the French army, commanded by marshal Berwick, which laid siege to Fontarabia. During this war, he concerted a plan for the destruction of three Spanish ships of the line, and a great quantity of naval stores, in the port of St. Andero, in the Bay of Biscay. An English squadron effected that enterprize; he himself contributed to the execution, by accompanying a detachment of troops, which Berwick sent at his solicitation, and was the first that leaped into the water, when the boats approached the shore.*

On the peace with Spain, he was constituted brigadier general, and returned to Madrid, in the same character as before. During his residence at that court, he was witness to many extraordinary events, which he has ably detailed in his dispatches: the abdication of Philip the Fifth, the succession and death of Louis, the resumption of the crown by Philip, the return of the Spanish infanta, the separation of Spain from France, and union with the house of

* Collins's Peerage.

Austria, and the rise and fall of Ripperda. He manifested great firmness and discretion when that minister was forcibly taken from his house; and his conduct on this occasion, impressed the king and the ministers with a deep sense of his diplomatic talents, and contributed to his future elevation.

On the rupture with Spain in 1727, which commenced with the siege of Gibraltar, he returned to England, was appointed vice chamberlain to the king, and soon afterwards nominated, in conjunction with Horace Walpole and Stephen Poyntz, plenipotentiary at the congress of Soissons.

He had now two great objects in view, a peerage, and the office of secretary of state. But he had to struggle as well against the ill-will of the king, who was highly displeased with his brother Charles Stanhope, as against the prejudices of Sir Robert Walpole, who, deeply impressed with a recollection of the conduct of earl Stanhope at Hanover, had taken an aversion to the very name. It required all the influence of the duke of Newcastle, and the friendship of Horace Walpole, to surmount these obstructions, which were not removed until he had gained an accession to his diplomatic character, by repairing to Spain, and concluding the treaty of Seville. His merits in that delicate negotiation, extorted the peerage from the king; and on the resignation of lord Townshend, he was nominated secretary of state. In that office, his knowledge of foreign affairs, his application

to business, his attention to diplomatic forms, the solemnity of his deportment, the precision of his dispatches, and his propensity to the adoption of vigorous measures against France, on the death of Augustus the Second, rendered him highly acceptable to the king. Having offended queen Caroline, by affecting to set up an interest independent of her, he would have been removed, had not his prudence and caution again conciliated her favour.

He never cordially coalesced with Sir Robert Walpole; and although he almost uniformly acted in subservience to his views, he looked up to the duke of Newcastle as his patron and friend, and in many instances sacrificed his own interests, even in opposition to the commands of the king, to gratitude and friendship. He was a man of strong sense and moderation; of high honour and disinterested integrity; and so tenacious of his word, that Philip of Spain said of him, "Stanhope is the only foreign minister who never deceived me."* He was of a mild and even temper; and contracted, by long habit, so much patience and phlegm, that he was characterised by the Portuguese minister, Don Azevedo,† as "*not being accustomed to interrupt those who spoke to him.*" A contemporary historian‡ has also farther described him as one whose moderation, good sense, and integrity, were such, that he was not considered as a party

* Stephen Poyntz to Thomas Townshend, August 4, 1729. Correspondence.

† Orford Papers. ‡ Tindal.

man, and had few or no personal enemies. Although he never spoke in the house of peers; yet he was highly useful in recommending to the cabinet the most prudent method of attack or defence, and in suggesting hints to those who were endowed with the gift of the tongue.

CHAPTER 37.

1730.

Origin and Progress of the Disagreement between Townshend and Walpole—Resignation—Retreat and Death of Townshend.

THE treaty of Seville was the concluding act of Townshend's administration. It was signed on the 9th of November 1729, and on the 16th of May he retired in disgust from the office of secretary of state. His resignation was owing to a disagreement with his brother-in-law and co-adjutor, Sir Robert Walpole, which had long subsisted. It had been occasionally compromised by the interference of common friends, but finally broke into a rupture, which rendered the continuance of both in office incompatible.

The causes of this misunderstanding were various, and originated from difference of temper, from disagreement on subjects of domestic and foreign policy, from political and private jealousy.

Townshend was frank and impetuous, long accustomed to dictate in the cabinet, and fond of recommending bold measures. Walpole was

mild, insinuating, pliant, and good-tempered; desirous of conciliating by lenient methods, but prepared to employ vigour when vigour was necessary.

The impetuous manners of Townshend, began to alienate the king, and disgust the queen; several members of the cabinet were no less dissatisfied with him. Newcastle, in particular, was anxious to remove a minister, who absolutely directed all foreign affairs, and who rendered him a mere cypher. He wished to procure the appointment of lord Harrington, who already owed his peerage to him, and who, he flattered himself, would act in subservience to his dictates.

To these public causes of misunderstanding, derived from a desire of pre-eminence, a private motive was unfortunately added. The family of Townshend had long been the most conspicuous, and accustomed to take the lead, as the only one then distinguished by a peerage, in the county of Norfolk; the Walpoles were subordinate both in estate and consequence, and Houghton was far inferior in splendour to Rainham.* But circumstances were much altered. Sir Robert Walpole was at the head of the treasury, a peerage had been conferred on his son, the increase of his paternal domains, the construction of a magnificent seat, the acquisition of a superb collection of paintings; a sumptuous style of living, and affable

* Rainham was built by Inigo Jones for Sir Roger Townshend.

manners, drew to Houghton an influx of company, and eclipsed the more sober, and less splendid establishment at Rainham.

Walpole had long been considered as the first minister in all business relating to the internal affairs. He was the principal butt of opposition, for the name of Townshend scarcely once occurs in the Craftsman, and the other political papers against government, while that of Walpole is seen in almost every page.

His influence over the queen had, on the accession of George the Second, prevented the removal of Townshend. He managed the house of commons, and was supported by a far greater number of friends, than his brother minister could boast, who had little parliamentary influence, and still less personal credit.

Walpole felt, in all these circumstances, his superior consequence. He was conscious that he should be supported by the queen, and was unwilling to continue in a subordinate situation; while Townshend, who had long been used to dictate, could not bear any opposition to his sentiments, or resistance to his views. He considered his brother minister as one who had first enlisted himself under his banners, and who ought still to act with the same implicit obedience to his commands. Hence a struggle for power ensued.

Townshend had been hitherto the principal dispenser of ecclesiastical preferments. This great object of ministerial influence was natu-

rally coveted by Walpole, and had occasioned frequent disputes. In many points of domestic administration, the violence of Townshend's measures was reprobated and opposed by Walpole, particularly in the business of Wood's coinage; in the haughty manner of writing to the duke of Grafton, then lord lieutenant of Ireland; and in the measures adopted in the riots in Scotland. In foreign affairs, Walpole affected not to interfere, declaring that he did not understand them, and that they did not belong to his department; yet he always opposed, as much as lay in his power, all complicated engagements, and uniformly objected to the too lavish expenditure of the public money, in the formation of alliances, which he often considered as useless and chimerical. His remonstrances had produced a sensible effect in opposition to the sentiments of Townshend; but it was particularly in the negotiation for the treaty of Hanover, that a wide difference of opinion had subsisted. He expressed his disapprobation at the precipitate manner in which it was concluded, and was offended that such an important step had been taken without a due communication to him.

He was still more dissatisfied when the Danish subsidy became due. For as France avoided paying her share, and the whole burthen fell upon England, he, as minister of finance, was under the necessity of finding resources to supply the deficiency.

In several dispatches from the foreign mi-

nisters in 1725 and 1726, frequent mention is made of the growing misunderstanding between Townshend and Walpole, and a rupture is described as unavoidable. Yet these bickerings and occasional instances of discordant sentiments, did not alienate the brother ministers. They continued to act together, and on the accession of George the Second, the removal of one would have been followed by the resignation of the other. Their union at this period was so close, and the opinion which Walpole entertained of Townshend so favourable, that in 1727, when Townshend was in imminent danger, Walpole expressed, in terms of affection and concern, his apprehensions of the loss which the cause would sustain from his death; "he considered him as the bulwark of the constitution; and trusted *that Providence would interpose to save the man, without whom all must fall to the ground.*"*

These disputes had been frequently allayed by the interposition of lady Townshend; like an Octavia between Anthony and Augustus, she had by a discreet exertion of her influence as wife and sister, moderated the asperities of the contending politicians. But her mediation unfortunately ceased by her death, which happened in March 1726.

Queen Caroline observed the growing misunderstanding between the brother ministers, and when the rupture became unavoidable, gave her support to Walpole in preference to Townshend.

* See Correspondence, Period IV.

By her influence, he soon obtained the preponderance.

Townshend, thus reduced to act a secondary part, was resolved to make an effort to recover his former power, by removing the duke of Newcastle, whose official jealousy, and attempts to raise lord Harrington to the office of secretary of state, had displeased him, and placing his friend lord Chesterfield, who had long aspired to that station, in his stead. Full of these projects, he accompanied the king to Hanover; and being the only English minister of the cabinet abroad, embraced the favourable opportunity of ingratiating himself. He became more obsequious to the king's German prejudices, paid his court with unceasing assiduity, and appeared to have gained so much influence, that he thought himself capable of obtaining the appointment of Chesterfield, who was embassador at the Hague, and had considerably distinguished himself in his diplomatic capacity. At the suggestion of lord Townshend, he waited on the king in his passage through Holland, and obtained permission to attend his majesty to London. When Chesterfield received the offer of the secretaryship of state, he inquired of lord Townshend whether the queen was secured; the answer implied no doubt. But as he had offended her majesty by the court he paid to lady Suffolk, she exerted all her influence, which was seldom exerted in vain, to frustrate the scheme.

Such an attempt, however secretly conducted,

could not escape the observation of Walpole. He conferred with the queen on the proper means of averting the design, and the communications he received from her in this and other particulars, inflamed his resentment. On quitting the palace after one of these conferences, he met Townshend at colonel Selwyn's, in Cleveland Court, in the presence of the duke of Newcastle, Mr. Pelham, colonel and Mrs. Selwyn. The conversation turned on a foreign negotiation, which at the desire of Walpole had been relinquished. Townshend, however, still required that the measure should be mentioned to the commons, at the same time that the house should be informed that it was given up. Walpole objecting to this proposal as inexpedient, and calculated only to give unnecessary trouble, Townshend said, "Since your object, and the house of commons is your concern more than mine, I shall not persist in my opinion; but as I now give way, I cannot avoid observing, that upon my honour I think that mode of proceeding would have been most advisable." Walpole, piqued at these expressions, lost his temper, and said, "My lord, for once, there is no man's sincerity which I doubt so much as your lordship's, and I never doubted it so much as when you are pleased to make such strong professions." Townshend, incensed at this reproach, seized him by the collar, Sir Robert caught hold of him in return, and then both, at the same instant, quitted their grasp, and laid their hands upon their swords. Mrs. Selwyn, alarmed, attempted

to call the guards, but was prevented by Pelham. Although their friends interposed to prevent an immediate duel; yet the contumelious expressions used on this occasion, rendered all attempts to heal the breach ineffectual.

Great difference of opinion had also arisen in regard to foreign affairs. When Townshend accompanied the king abroad, in May 1729, he considered the Emperor as the sole cause of the obstacles which impeded a general pacification, and immediately on his arrival at Hanover, plunged into the chaos of German politics. He was so much incensed against the Emperor, and so vehemently inclined to compel him to accede to the admission of Spanish garrisons into Parma and Leghorn, that he promoted, to the utmost of his power, the conclusion of a subsidiary alliance with the four electors of the Rhine, by which England could not have guarantied the Pragmatic Sanction during the existence of that alliance. On the contrary, Walpole, anxious not to do any thing which might render England incapable for a time to gratify the Emperor in his favourite project, secretly opposed the conclusion of the treaty, and laboured to reconcile the discordant politics of Spain and Austria, or if that was impossible, to conciliate Spain without too much irritating the Emperor.

This collision of opinions naturally increased the misunderstanding, led them to counteract each other, and to strive for pre-eminence in the cabinet.

Having failed in raising Chesterfield to the office of secretary of state, Townshend made a last attempt to obtain that place for Sir Paul Methuen, in which he was equally unsuccessful. These disappointments increased his natural irritability, which he vented in peevish expressions against lord Harrington; and these reproaches, probably exaggerated by the duke of Newcastle, increased the animosities in the cabinet.

At length the contest was brought to a crisis. Townshend seems to have obtained the goodwill of the king by representing, that he was the only supporter of his German interest, that lord Harrington neglected pressing the plan of operations against the Emperor, and that Hanover would be sacrificed by the new arrangements. In these circumstances, the duke of Newcastle, with the approbation of the Walpoles, drew up a dispatch to the plenipotentiaries at Soissons, dissuading an attack of the Austrian Netherlands, advising that an army should be assembled on the banks of the Rhine, for the purpose of threatening the frontiers of Bohemia; and strongly recommending, that before this plan was concerted with France, proposals of accommodation should be presented to the Emperor. But before the letter was submitted to the king, Townshend had written to his majesty, enforcing the necessity of forming a plan of hostile operations, before any declaration was made, for the purpose of compelling the king of Prussia to submit, and reducing the

Emperor to accept the terms dictated by England and her allies.

The king approved this advice, and ordered Townshend to communicate his resolution to the duke of Newcastle and Horace Walpole, that instructions might be forwarded to the plenipotentiaries, in conformity to that opinion. Townshend accordingly sent the letter, with the king's answer, to Horace Walpole, and went into Norfolk for a few days. In this dilemma, the duke despaired of success, and proposed to act agreeably to the dictates of Townshend. But Sir Robert Walpole communicated Newcastle's dispatch to the queen, and obtained, through her influence, the assent of the king, who expressed his full approbation of the contents.

Townshend, finding that his personal influence with the king was not sufficient to counteract the exertions of his rivals, opposed by the queen, and deserted by the remaining members of the cabinet, gave in his resignation, and retired from public affairs.

In several letters to his confidential correspondents abroad, which are still extant in the Rainham Collection, Townshend attributes his resignation principally to the effects of his dangerous illness in 1727, which rendered him incapable of supporting the fatigues of his place; but hints at the same time with great delicacy at the coolness and misintelligence which had arisen between him and Sir Robert Walpole, and at the disgust he had recently received from

that quarter. At the same time he adds, with spirit and dignity; "I am happy to announce that my retreat has not made any alteration in public affairs, and that I never could have resolved to quit my situation, had I not been fully convinced that Sir Robert Walpole will follow the same principles, and carry on the same measures which had been hitherto pursued." In his letter to Slingelandt, he observes, "the king has had the goodness to permit me to retire in the most obliging manner, and has most graciously received the assurances, which I took the liberty to make, that, notwithstanding my resignation, I should always be ready to furnish all the eclaircissements in my power whenever it shall be deemed necessary for his service."*

Townshend retired with a most unsullied character for integrity, honour, and disinterestedness, and gave several striking proofs that he could command the natural warmth of his temper, and rise superior to the malignant influence of party and disappointed ambition. The opposition, who had formed sanguine expectations from the disunion in the cabinet, were prepared to receive him with open arms, but he resisted their advances, and firmly persevered in his original determination. Soon after Chesterfield commenced his ardent opposition to Walpole, he went to Rainham, and requested Townshend to attend an important question in the house of lords. Townshend replied, that he had formed a resolution which

* Correspondence, V. 2. p. 704.

he could not break, of never again engaging in political contests. "I recollect," he added, "that lord Cowper, though a staunch Whig, had been betrayed by personal pique and party resentment, in his opposition to the ministry, to throw himself into the arms of the Tories, and even to support principles which tended to serve the cause of the Jacobites. I know that I am extremely warm; and I am apprehensive if I should attend the house of lords, I also may be hurried away by the impetuosity of my temper, and by personal resentment to adopt a line of conduct which in my cooler moments I may regret." He maintained this honourable and truly patriotic resolution; and thus proved himself worthy of the highest eulogium.

He passed the evening of his days in the pursuit of rural occupations and agricultural experiments. His improvements ameliorated the state of husbandry, his hospitality endeared him to his neighbours, and the dignity of his character insured respect. Apprehensive of being tempted again to enter into those scenes of active life, which he had resolved totally to abandon, he never revisited the capital, but died at Rainham, in 1738, in the 65th year of his age.

Notwithstanding the asperity with which this contest was conducted, the brother ministers seem to have renounced their friendship, without forfeiting their esteem. Townshend did not indulge in peevish expressions against his successful rival, and Sir Robert Walpole

never blamed the ministerial conduct, or depreciated the abilities of lord Townshend. He was always unwilling to enter into the causes of their disunion; when an intimate friend pressed him on the subject some years afterwards, he made several attempts to evade the question, and at length replied, "It is difficult to trace the causes of a dispute between statesmen, but I will give you the history in a few words; as long as the firm of the house was Townshend and Walpole, the utmost harmony prevailed; but it no sooner became Walpole and Townshend, than things went wrong, and a separation ensued."*

* The contents of this chapter are derived from the letters in the Correspondence.—Etough's Papers.—The late Earl of Hardwicke's Memorandums.—Maty's Life of Lord Chesterfield.—Communications from the earl of Orford, lord Sydney, and his brother Charles Townshend, esquire.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX TO VOL. II.

CONTAINING

SELECT PARTS

OF THE

CORRESPONDENCE

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE FIRST EDITION.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE KING.

[Orford and Walpole Papers.]

Some Thoughts and Considerations concerning the present Posture of the South Sea Stock, humbly laid before his Majesty.*

IT was with great reluctance, and in obedience only to your majesty's commands, that I was prevailed upon to undertake any thing relating to the South Sea affairs. I am too sensible of the many difficulties, that will attend any scheme, formed to regulate the perplexed and unfortunate state of the South Sea company, to hope that satisfaction can be given, to the infinite number of sufferers. But the public security, and the restoring and establishing public credit, in which your majesty's government is so highly concerned, are first to be consulted, and this I hope, may by this means be effectually settled and secured. A due and compassionate regard is to be shown to the losses of private men, and all that I conceive can be expected is, to give some ease and relief to the present unhappy circumstances, in which great numbers are now involved; but it seems to me impossible, so

* The original draught in the hand-writing of Sir Robert Walpole, is among the Orford papers; a fair copy among the Walpole papers.

far to repair every man's losses, that a great many will not still remain considerable losers. An attempt to raise the stock to a higher value than it can be supported at, would only involve a new set of persons in the misfortunes, that others at present labour under, and expose the public to the great loss, that will be sustain'd by foreigners selling out at high prices, and exporting our gold and silver. And what I desire, your majesty, may be observed thro' this scheme, is, that I take every thing as I found it, and do nothing to alter any man's circumstances, but by an accession of profit from the Bank and India company, and by an impartial distribution of the whole, as it now appears, from the public transactions of the company; and have carefully avoided, either to inforce or release any public or private contract or obligation, or to ease or relieve any one sort of adventurers, at the loss and expense of another.

Proposal.

That the first money subscription at 300*l.* per cent. be compleated, all future payments to be made in South Sea bonds, and allowing longer time for the same, to make them less, and more easy. That stock be given for the moneys already paid in, upon the 2d, 3d, and 4th, money subscriptions, at 400*l.* per cent. with the Midsummer dividend, and that all future payments thereon, be discharged. That the stock, which shall then remain undisposed of, be divided among the present proprietors of stock, in proportion to their several interests, and thereby an end put to the selling any more stock by subscription. That the increased capital of the South Sea stock, amounting in the whole, to 38 millions or thereabouts, be divided into three parts, 20 millions to remain to the capital of the South Sea stock, 9 millions to be ingrafted into the bank stock, and 9 millions to be ingrafted into the East India company, at 120 per cent. and the fund from the

exchequer to attend this distribution, but the parts of the bank and East India company, to be all 5 per cent. Each company to have its proportion of the charges of management allowed by the publick. That each proprietor of South Sea stock, shall have his proportion in the new ingrafted capital stock, of each of the respective companies, according to this distribution. That all profits which have hitherto arisen, by sale of stock by subscription, amounting to 15,450,000*l.* shall remain for the benefit of the 20 millions South Sea stock, subject to all charges and incumbrances. That all future privileges and advantages, to be granted by the public, shall likewise remain for the benefit of the 20 millions South Sea stock. That any further reasonable privileges and advantages be granted to the bank and India company, to induce and enable them to admit this ingraftment.

Observations upon the Proposals.

This method, puts an end to the great demand of money, that arises from time to time, by sale of stock by subscription, which alone has put the town under such constant distress for money, upon every payment, that whilst that subsisted, it was impossible for credit to revive; the payments to be made betwixt the 14th November, 1720, and the 14th August, 1721, both inclusive, amounting to 8,478,600*l.* within the compass of ten months, which were to be continued on, till the whole subscriptions had been compleated, which would not have ended, till the 2d of July 1725, but are now to be totally discharged. Every subscriber has great ease and relief from this alteration, by being obliged to take only 250*l.* stock at 400 per cent. who is now obliged to take 1000 stock, at the same price; and when the Midsummer dividend of 10 per cent. in stock, making 25*l.* stock, shall be added to the 250*l.* stock, and the future dividend in stock, arising from the stock undisposed of, after the execution of this scheme,

amounting to above 46 per cent. in stock, shall be added to the 275*l.* stock; every subscriber, for 1000*l.* paid, will receive 401*l.* 10*s.* stock. The same computation holds upon every 1000*l.* in the redeemable funds, receiving stock at the same price, with the same dividends in stock. The dividend of the stock undisposed of upon the capital puts an end to all future sales of stock by subscription, which not only prevents the former mischief from being repeated, but puts every proprietor in immediate possession of his just share, arising from the profits of the whole, without waiting for annual dividends, subject to the management of directors, and the sundry chances and hazards, that payments to be received in a long course of time are liable to; and every proprietor, not only receives his share of profit, arising from the South Sea scheme, but has likewise a further advantage upon the whole, by the ingraftment of one half of his increased capital into the bank and East India company.

This distribution, by ingrafting 9 millions into the bank, and 9 millions into the East India company, reduces the capital of the South Sea company to 20 millions. This reduction alone remedies some of the greatest mischiefs that attended the whole scheme. A capital of 40 millions is from its bulk alone impracticable, and if raised to an advanced price in any high degree, cannot possibly be negociated; not only for want of sufficient specie or paper money, but for want of property. Suppose a capital of 40 millions raised to 1000 per cent. the value is 400 millions: it is not to be conceived, that all the property of England can answer such an immense and imaginary value, much less that any sort of money can be found to negociate one half of it. It is as impossible to find any profits that can supply a dividend upon so large a capital at any advanced price; but the capital being reduced to one half, all profits and advantages that can be reasonably given to support the scheme, are double upon the half,

to what they would be upon the whole. And by this proposal, all profits that have arisen already by the sale of stock, and all future advantages to be granted by the public, are reserved for the 20 millions of South Sea stock. And as every proprietor is to have his just proportion in each part of the distribution, he partakes in the advantages reserved for the South Sea company in as full a manner as if his whole had remained there. Besides the profits arising in the South Sea company, he likewise receives bank stock at 120 per cent. computed at 160 per cent. and India stock at 120 per cent. computed at 200 per cent.; and for the interest of his money, he will in all probability receive 8 per cent. per annum from the bank, and 10 per cent. per annum from the East India company, in lieu of the exchequer annuity of 5 per cent. per annum upon each, which are now to be transfer'd to the bank and India company.

And altho' every proprietor gives 120 per cent. for the bank stock, which he is to have in his own right, the 20 per cent. which upon the 9 millions to be ingrafted into the bank, makes in the whole one million and half, is reserved for the common benefit of the whole bank, in which every proprietor is to have his just share, and this reduces the price given for bank stock to 111*l.* 5*s.* or thereabouts; so that every South Sea proprietor gains of one fourth of his South Sea stock about 40 per cent. in the advanced price of bank stock, and upon one fourth about 80 per cent. in the advanced price of India stock; or in another view, for the 20 per cent. which he pays for bank stock above par, he will receive an additional dividend of 3 per cent. per annum, and for the 20 per cent. paid for India stock above par 5 per cent. per annum; and this is most evidently an addition of so much to every man's property in the South Sea stock.

Besides these private advantages, this distribution of this great capital, with regard to the government

and the public, was almost necessary, and being now divided betwixt the three great bodies and companies of the city, establishes such a balance of power among them, as may make them all usefull to the publick. The capital of the South Sea company will be now 20 millions, the capital of the bank 14 millions and half, the capital of the East India Company 12,200,000l.; and as the publick has been, and frequently must be obliged to apply to these corporate bodies, for the support of publick credit, the public will not be under a necessity to accept the hard terms which one single powerfull body might be inclinable to impose, when all three are in a condition to aid and assist upon any emergency, and this has been verified by constant experience.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Various intelligences concerning the schemes of the pretender and jacobites in Italy and Spain—Kelly arrested—Proofs of bishop Atterbury's treasonable correspondencies—Incident of the dog Harlequin.

DEAR HORACE; May 29, 1722. O. S.

I HAVE several times been prevented from writing to you to give you an account how affairs stood here, and in particular in regard to the plot, which has been hitherto carried on in the same manner, and with a resolution to be executed in case the king goes abroad; but as his majesty is now come to a declaration, that he will not go this summer, I am of opinion, that this will put an end to the whole enterprise. The state of our intelligence, as it stands now, is in the several intercepted letters going and coming, the repeated ad-

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vices from France from the same great canal,* confirmed by several particulars and advices directly from Rome: these last have come to us by two different ways from Davenant,† who is now at Rome, with several circumstances, and the emperor's minister residing there, communicated by way of France from Penterrider. There are allowances to be made in the accounts that come from Penterrider, who, I think, aggravates things to his own interest and purpose, to show that the courts of France and Spain are concerned in this matter. The substance of these advices, as far as I think they are really to be credited is, that the pretender has of late been frequently absent from Rome at a country house taken for him, where he is gone now to reside altogether, the better to cover his absence, if his departure should be determined upon. He is to embark at Port Longone, where three Spanish men of war attend him, that came thither with stores and ammunition; but it is my opinion, they came thither on purpose. He is to go incognito to Spain, and be there in a readinesse to imbark upon notice that the king is gone. The duke of Ormond has likewise left Madrid, and is at a country house, 'tis supposed with the same view. But it is very plain that the whole scheme is concerted for the king's going abroad, and though I think it most probable, that we shall hear of the pretender's having left Italy; I can't believe but he will wait in Spain, 'till he hears from hence, what resolution the king has finally taken in regard to his journey; which being now wholly put off, I think it will beget new considerations, and determine in laying the project aside.

All other of our advices are so very agreeable to this from Rome; that I think there is no room to doubt but the truth is much as I have stated and I confesse to you, that it appears to me so very difficult to believe enough with regard to Spain, without believing too

* The regent. † British envoy.

much, that I am inclined to to carry my apprehensions from that quarter a great deal further than I think it proper for any of us as yet to own, or that either of the secretaries of state will agree with me in. All the intercepted letters and correspondences carried on in cant allegories, cyphers, and fictitious names, have hitherto confirmed our other accounts; but of late it is plain they suppose we see what they write, that every thing now is wrote on purpose to be read. These letters were directed to several different addresses, and left at several coffee-houses; but we learnt that one Kelly, alias Johnson, call'd for them all, and distributed them properly; and when we found that we had no further use of seeing them, it was resolved to take up Kelly, which was done, and all his papers seized, but by a most scandalous management, he was suffered to gett his sword, which had been taken from him, to drive the messengers out of the room, and burn his papers. You may easily imagine what a noise such a thing makes; and what makes it more material in these correspondences, that pass'd through Kelly's hand, it was very plain, that the names of *Illington* and *Jones*, were the bishop of Rochester, which has now been proved by an incident of a little dog, that was sent from France to Mrs. Illington (before his lordship's lady died) and was mentioned in some of the most treasonable letters. Upon the examination, it has been confessed, that this dog* was sent to the bishop of

* The curious incident relating to the dog mentioned in this letter, as one among many proofs, that Atterbury had maintained a treasonable correspondence with the pretender's agents, is thus related in the report of the committee of secrecy, drawn up by Pulteney: "Some letters having been intercepted, which there is good reason to believe were from the bishop of Rochester, and one of these letters signed T. Jones, and another T Illington, the committee lay before the house the evidence they found of the bishop's being designed by these two names, collected from circumstances; which being in themselves seemingly minute, and of little consequence, were for this reason more frankly confessed by those, who

Rochester, which has at least served to fix the certainty of the names. We are in trace of several things very material, but we fox-hunters know that we do not always find every fox that we crosse upon; but I doubt not but this matter will come out so as to shame

were obstinate in concealing stronger proofs; and yet at the same time, lead directly to the discovery of the person meant by those names. Mrs. Barnes, being examined before a committee of the council, obstinately refused to make the least discovery relating to George Kelly; but when she came to be asked what she knew about a dog, sent over by Kelly from France; not suspecting this could lead to any discovery, she readily owned, that a spotted little dog, called Harlequin, which was brought from France, and had a leg broken, was left with her to be cured: that the said dog was not for her, but for the bishop of Rochester; and that Kelly promised to get the dog of the bishop of Rochester for her, in case it did not recover of its lameness. This declaration, she signed in the presence of the committee of council: and Kelly himself made no difficulty to own the receiving such a dog from France. But it appears by letters intercepted between Kelly and his correspondents in France, that a dog so named and hurt, was sent over to Kelly from France, to be delivered as a present to the person denoted by the name of Jones or Illington."* This coincidence of circumstances, proved indisputably, that bishop Atterbury was designed under the names of Jones and Illington: the bishop himself, in his eloquent defence, does not condescend to take any notice of this circumstance; his advocates, aware of the impression which it had made against their client, endeavoured to refute it; but could only oppose suppositions to positive fact. As ridicule has more weight than sophistry, Swift defended his friend Atterbury in some burlesque verses, "upon the horrid plot discovered by the bishop of Rochester's French dog," in a dialogue between a whig and a tory; in which the author humourously decries the evidence derived from the dog:

Now let me tell you plainly, sir,
Our witness is a real *curr*,
A dog of spirit for his years,
Has twice two legs, two hanging ears;
His name is *Harlequin* I wot,
And that's a name in ev'ry *plot*:

*. Report of the Secret Committee; see also Abstract of the Report in Political State of Great Britain, vol. 25, p. 306.

all gainsayers. I know nothing else to trouble you with, but the prospect we have of the two companies agreeing, which I persuade myself is now past hazard, and stocks begin now to rise so fast, that I hope an immediate execution may attend the agreement, which has been the only cause of the late delay.

LORD TOWNSHEND TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Hardwicke Papers.]

Relates his successful contest with baron Sparre, Bernsdorf, and Carteret, about the affairs of Sweden—Is treated by the king with superior confidence—Unsuccessful cabals of Carteret with some of the Hanoverians.

I HAVE received the favour of your private letter of the 19th July, but before I come to answer the particulars contained in it, I must acquaint you with a struggle I have had here with M. Bernstorf and lord Carteret, which has ended as well as could be wished. Some days ago, baron Sparre desired a conference with me on the subject of the czar's intended expedition, and pressed me very much to assist him in obtaining for his master an immediate supply of 10,000*l.* I did not at first shew myself very averse to this proposal, being willing to learn from him, how far his court were alarmed with the czar's propositions, and what steps they intended to take towards opposing them: but upon farther conversation, I plainly discovered, that they were in no great fear in Sweden on this event, persuading themselves, that if the czar should espouse the duke of Holstein's interest with an armed force, or should even pretend to influence the diet by appearing on their coasts, such a violence and indignity would

turn to the king of Sweden's advantage; and he made no difficulty to own to me, that the only use intended to be made of the 10,000*l.* was, to enable the king of Sweden to carry some points in the diet. You will easily believe, that after such a confession, I could not think it for our master's service, to advise him to an expence, neither justifiable by our treaties, nor of any service towards averting the present danger, and which might have opened the way for repeated applications of the same nature.

The next day after Sparre had been with me, I met Bernstorf and lord Carteret in the king's antichamber, and could easily perceive by their discourse, that Sparre's demand had been made in concert with them, since Mr. Bernstorf not only pressed my advising the king to grant that sum, but urged the necessity of sending to England for six or eight men of war to join the Danish fleet. I remonstrated to him, that the sending for so insignificant a squadron, might indeed help to inflame the present discontents in England, and to alarm and affect publick credit, but could not possibly be of the least service for opposing any attempt of the czar, since before any such ships could be fitted out for the Baltick, the stroke (if any were really intended) must be struck, and the advanced season of the year, as it must soon send home the czar's fleet, so it would probably oblige ours to return within a week or fortnight after its arrival; and even supposing our ships at present in the Baltick, yet the Danish fleet (which consists of no more than ten) joined to so inconsiderable a number of ours, would not be in a condition to make head against a force so much superior as the czar's (including his galleys) is represented to be; besides, that it is not yet certain on what side the storm would fall. Notwithstanding my arguments, he still persisted in the same sentiments; and went in to the king, full of the necessity of sending both for ships and money from England. In the mean time, I discoursed

with lord Carteret, whom I found agreeing with Bernstorf, or at least for sending to lord Berkley to have the ships in readiness, which proposal appeared to me more absurd than Bernstorf's; since such a preparation would equally have alarmed the nation without any possibility of our reaping the least benefit from it.

As soon as Bernstorf came out, we went in to the king together, where the point was fairly battled, and I had the satisfaction to find the king entirely agree with me in opinion, and for the same reasons, to the no small mortification of my antagonist. His majesty is sensible, that Bernstorf and my colleague had been even assisting and instructing Sparre in the solicitation he should make, and for this reason, he does not doubt, but we shall soon have the same demand renewed from Stockholm, in a more artful and authentic manner, on the foot of the assistance stipulated by our treaty. But besides, that by that time all thoughts of a squadron from England must be over, his majesty is firmly resolved not to assist Sweden with a farthing of money, till the case of the treaty shall actually exist, and some method shall be proposed, that may be judged effectual for averting the common danger. And tho' his majesty desires above all things, that such a sum of money as I mentioned in my last, may be got ready against any sudden emergency (which will be so effectual a service, that I cannot sufficiently recommend it to your care) yet he has given me orders to assure you in the most express terms, that not a farthing of it shall be touched, except in the case of such evident and extensive danger as shall fully justify such an expence to a British parliament; and I have the strongest assurances from the manner in which Bernstorf was treated, and what the king said to me of him on this occasion, that neither he nor any of the ministers here will be able to prevail with his majesty to depart from these resolutions.

You will see by the copy of Mr. Finch's letter en-

closed in my publick dispatch, that the alarm is not hitherto very great in Sweden, which his majesty is much pleased with, as favouring his intentions of refusing both the ships and money, and he has ordered me to take occasion from that letter to treat this expedition of the czar as of no great consequence; promising to do the same on his part. Tho' lord Carteret came to me late last night to let me know that Bernstorf had news of the czar's being seen at sea, holding his course towards Sweden, with Holstein and Swedish colours; yet if some advices, which I have seen this day from Petersburgh are true, he has not embarked any of the forces intended, and the whole expedition is like to end in exercising his sailors.

I have the satisfaction to assure you, that as I never saw the king in righter dispositions, even in relation to those interests towards which he may naturally be supposed somewhat partial, so I never at any time since I had the honour to serve him, was used with half the confidence, and visible marks of distinction, that I have met with since my being here, which as it cannot fail by degrees to undeceive people in England, so I hope it will make you and the rest of our friends less solicitous in pushing particular points against your adversaries.

I am sorry to find lord Bolingbroke's affair continues to make ill blood among our friends. I think you were entirely right in keeping clear of any further engagements with him; and since it will be absolutely necessary for us to rest on the whig bottom, I think this should make us double our diligence to keep well with the bishops, which I hope you will attempt by all opportunities that offer. I hear nothing of Bolingbroke's coming hither as yet, and wish, for many reasons, his visit may be prevented.

The king continues his resolution of signing no paper relating to his British affairs, but in my presence.

My brother Carteret set out with making his court to Bernstorf, countess Platen, and madame de Wendt, an old friend of lord Sunderland, who is supposed to govern the countess, and I suppose he hoped to make use of Schrader, Plessen, and such little emissaries and intelligencers, brought up to lying and intrigue. I make it my chief business to pay my court to our master; and to preserve the confidence of our old friends, taking care at the same time to shew all the civilities I safely can, to the others. I see no reason hitherto to repent of the interest I have made choice of, tho' my brother secretary, I believe, does, if I may judge by the countenance of his friends, and by his behaviour to me, which grows more supple than it was at first. As for Bernstorf, his own creatures acknowledge that he has less credit with the king than ever. If there be a place in the world where faction and intrigue are natural and in fashion, it is here, which makes it no easy task for a stranger to behave himself inoffensively: however, I am very sure, I have lost no friend, and I think I have made no enemy; tho' it is not a very agreeable situation to be eternally upon one's guard from all quarters. I must again repeat to you, that all here goes on as well as could be wished; but I earnestly recommend to you, that my private letters, and particularly what I wrote in my last, may be imparted to no one living, but the duke of Newcastle. Things are often reported back hither unaccountably; and the freedom we use in writing to one another, might be of the last ill consequence, if it were even suspected.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO LORD TOWNSHEND.

[Hardwicke Papers.]

Will provide the 200,000l. but trusts there will be no occasion to employ it—Enforces the necessity of not being precipitate, and strongly recommends cautious measures—Lord Bolingbroke betrays to him lord Carteret's intrigues with the tories, and proposes a coalition of the tories with Townshend and Walpole, who warmly objects to the measure.

(Private—Copy.)

Whitehall, July 23—August 3, 1723.

I HOPE the answer I have sent you, concerning this great affair, will be to the king's and your lordship's satisfaction. The 150,000*l.* may certainly be had; but it is out of that provision I made upon a supposition that the king might possibly stay later than Christmas; so that both services cannot possibly be answered; which I presume you will make his majesty sensible of. At the same time, I cannot but wish from my heart, that this money may not be demanded; and if it can be avoided, I hope your lordship will let it take that turn, nor do I see how it can be employed at all by way of prevention; for if the czar's fleet was ready to sail, my agreement for this subsidy will come too late, and the blow be struck before a force can be got ready to repel it. For my part, I enter much into that part of your lordship's reasoning, to be as well as we can with the new king, or at least to shew a disposition to be so. If we enter precipitately into any engagement upon this occasion, we shall not carry the nation, nor perhaps the parliament along with us; but if we wait, and are driven into it, it will be seen and be thought to be the interest of Great Britain alone, that made us engage; and I do not know, whether this attempt of the czar, coming upon us so much by surprise, may

not be more fortunate, than a more early intelligence. In a word, my *politics are, to keep free from all engagements, as long as we possibly can. You'll forgive my sudden, and possibly very improper thoughts upon a subject, that I am but little acquainted with; but I am mightily inclined to be cautious.*

You may be sure, I shall not neglect turning my thoughts towards the business of next sessions, but if any such things as we are now talking of should happen, there is an end of all that at once.

I submit it further to your lordship's consideration, whether it is not worth thinking of; what will be our condition, if we are the only power in all Europe that enters immediately into this quarrel? If the Swedish nation are ready for a revolution, as the ill humours now prevailing seem to portend, it will be impossible to prevent it; and we shall have made the new king our enemy, who might possibly pretend otherwise to take the part that the jacobites have a long time flattered themselves he will; it will all be imputed to this provocation of ours. France has, I apprehend, been a long time in negociation with the czar: can France be ignorant of this measure; or what part will France act upon this occasion? In short, I wish to God, we may at least for a little time remain neuters, and look on, if all the rest of Europe does the same thing. But all this I submit to your better judgement.

Lord Bolingbroke was with me last week, and shewed me the two letters he received from your lordship and lord Carteret: the letters were as unlike to one another, as the authors, and I assure you your brother secretary said not one word of future services, but gave him a bare dry compliment. This is agreeable to the part they all act here to keep themselves entirely clear of all engagements. I spoke very plainly to lord B. in the same manner, I had talked before, and gave him no hopes, that we would hazard the king's affairs by rashly undertaking any thing in parliament. But what I had

chiefly to acquaint you with was, what lord B. said upon another subject. He introduced the conversation, with excusing himself for entering into any negociation, which he would, or would not proceed upon, as I should approve. He told me, he had held several conversations with sir William Windham and lord Bathurst, who spoke to him in their own names, and in the name of lord Gower: they declared themselves weary of the situation they were in, and ready to enter into any measures with your lordship, and your humble servant. They said they were in measures with lord Carteret all last winter, and corresponded frequently with him by messages, that the concert was with those three, and lord Anglesea, and lord Carteret; that Carteret had frequently pressed them to attack me personally, and that Anglesea was always on that side of the question; that this correspondence was founded upon repeated assurances of an undoubted superior interest, sufficient to support them, and continued till his lordship's departure; that they now thought themselves deceived by him, and were desirous to rid themselves of the disagreeable situation they were in, by renouncing jacobitism, &c. I answered it was both impossible and unadvisable for me to enter into any such negociation, and told lord Bolingbroke, I thought he was doing a most imprudent thing, who was to expect his salvation from a whig parliament, to be negotiating to bring in a sett of tories; that if this should be known, his case would be desperate in parliament; and desired and advised him to give this answer to his friends, as from his own farther recollection: and that he thought it not proper upon consideration to mention it to me, which he seemed to acquiesce in, and to be satisfied. I need not observe to you: here is a direct confession of Carteret's dealing with the tories throughout all last session, which they are very explicit in.

LORD TOWNSHEND TO ROBERT WALPOLE

[Hardwicke Papers.]

King warmly commends Walpole, and is inclined to follow his advice.

(Private—Copy.)

DEAR SIR; Hanover, August 11, 1723.

YOUR letter of the 23d of July, relating to the grand affair, was entirely to our master's satisfaction. I asked him yesterday, upon shewing him my answer to it, whether I had not made you too many compliments; he said, that was impossible; you never had your equal in business, with many more warm expressions of the same kind. You will see by my letter, in Mr. Tilson's hand, that our accounts of the czar's expedition vary, and there is good reason to hope his forces are not embarked, tho' Bernstorf labours to have the contrary believed, and to keep up the alarm, in which he is seconded by my colleague. But I have the satisfaction to find the king perfectly steady to the sentiments I mentioned in my last, so that you may depend upon it, without the most evident and immediate necessity, not a penny will be touched; but we shall save both our money and credit. I agree with you entirely in your reasonings on this affair: and you may be assured, I shall not advise the king to take the lead, much less to enter the lists alone against the czar and his Swedish pretender, except some unforeseen accident should make it absolutely necessary for the common safety.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO LORD TOWNSHEND.

[Hardwicke Papers.]

Rise of the stocks—Flourishing state of public credit.

(Copy.)

August 30th, 1723.

YOU cannot but observe the late rise of our stocks. South Sea was actually sold on Monday at 110. But the bulls and bears have sunk it again to betwixt seven and eight. I had the good fortune to tell his majesty before he went, that I thought it would come to this price before Michaelmas. This rise was nothing imaginary, not at all the effect of art. The public credit is now in so flourishing a condition, that upon some difficulties the duchess of Marlborough had a mind to make in that loan, I could have had 200,000*l.* in land tallies, with the interest upon them, which was about 12*s.* 6*d.*; in all 3*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.*; and I think it is plain we shall have the whole supply of next year at 3 per cent. even without the Marlborough money; and I flatter myself, that the next session of parliament will bring no discredit to those that have the honour to serve the king in his revenue.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO LORD TOWNSHEND.

[Townshend Papers.]

Mentions rumours of divisions among the king's ministers at Hanover —From whence they originate—Consequences of these rumours if not checked—Extreme tranquillity in England.

MY LORD; Whitehall, August 30, 1723.

I AVOID as much as I can, troubling your lordship with all the idle stories and reports that are spread about here, tho' they come all from your side, least when they return upon the rebound, they may be either magnified or represented in such colours, and made use of to such purposes as the authors of them first design'd they should. I think it proper just to mention them to you, with a general remark or two, which I think indeed applicable to them all. They are sent over either with a view to keep up divisions here among the king's friends and servants, and to countenance people in forming intrigues and opposition, as if a sufficient interest was form'd at Hanover to support them; or if they are of another sort, they are to be the matter of complaint, and the reports which arise and are invented by themselves, are made use of as arguments of designs carrying on against them. Of these sorts, are the several reports that have fill'd the town, of the great differences betwixt the two secretaries at Hanover, of lord Carteret's being soon expected back in England, represented by some as a design to form a new ministry in conjunction with himself, by others as returning in disgrace.

Another report that has obtained very much is, that lord Carteret had endeavour'd or procured the bringing over the countesse of Platen into England. 'Tis great

pity, my lord, that some check cannot be given to these proceedings, which altho' they may seem trivial have their ill effects: all that I can say is, when I am sure, I know from what quarter they do not come, it seems not hard to guesse from whence they have source. And I find these reports are not confin'd to England; but my son, who return'd hither last night from Paris, tells me there they talk of nothing more, and talk as they are variously affected; but the story of the lady's journey is received there as a settled point. These stories, and the different reasonings upon them, and the True Briton, are the only things that cause the least disturbance here: we are otherwise in a state of tranquillity and satisfaction beyond what I have ever known; but you may depend upon it, the prospect of changes will allways animate the discontented and disaffected.

[Etough Papers.]

ETOUGH'S *minutes of a conversation with sir Robert Walpole, on the attempt of lord Bolingbroke and the duchess of Kendal to obtain his dismission in* 1727.

(SEPTEMBER 13, 1737.) I had an opportunity for full conversation with sir Robert Walpole. I mentioned then to him, Bolingbroke's reports, of his often attending the late king at supper, and of his interest being so prevailing, that it was with the utmost importunity and address, he persuaded the king to defer the making him prime minister, till he returned from Hanover. He condescended to give me this explanation. He said lying was so natural to St. John, that it was impossible for him to keep within the bounds of truth. He might truly boast of his prospects, for they were very great; tho' things were not so fixed and near as he pretended.

He had the entire interest of the dutchess of Kendal, and having this, what consequences time would probably have produced, required no explanation. St. John, he averred, had only been once with the king, which was owing to his importunity.

The king had given sir Robert a memorial of St. John's, consisting of three sheets of paper. He observed the cover was not sealed, and therefore the deliverer of it must certainly know from whence it came, and perhaps the contents. On the two Turks disclaiming all knowledge of the affair, he went to the dutchess of Kendal, who owned the part she had acted, with the addition of false and frivolous excuses. He then observed, that her grace was of weak and low understanding. St. John, in this address, had desired an audience, and undertook, if admitted, to demonstrate the kingdom must shortly be ruined, if sir R. Walpole continued prime minister. Sir R. Walpole himself, humbly and earnestly desired he might be admitted; he told the king, if this was not done, the clamour would be, that he kept him to himself, and would allow none to come near him, to tell the truth. This was repeated to the dutchess, who promised her interest with the king.

When sir Robert next attended her grace, she said the king was averse to seeing St. John, taking for granted, it must make you uneasy. He replied, he could not be easy till St. John was admitted. This was so much pressed, that he was soon after gratified with an audience. Lord Lechmere happened to come upon business at the same time, he enquired who was in the closet; he heard Walpole was also at court: he then imagined him to be sole director. Fully possessed with this conceit, he went in to the king. He began with reviling Walpole, as not being contented with doing mischief himself, but introducing one who was, if possible, much worse; and thus he departed, without offering the papers to be signed, which he brought

as chancellor of the dutchy. This diverted the king extreamly, who made it the subject of conversation when sir Robert waited on him; he slightly mentioned St. John's demonstrations, and called them bagatelles.

I have been thus minute and exact, because St. John and his friends have made the thing surer and more immediate, than can be justified from reality. On the other side, some of the great man's nearest relations and friends have deemed it as groundless, and have thought fit to represent him as under no sort of apprehension from his rival. I will therefore repeat what he said several times, and particularly at the end of the conversation, which was nearly in these words. "As he had the dutchess entirely on his side, I need not add, what must or might in time have been the consequence." He informed me the same day, that the bill in favour of St. John, is wholly to be ascribed to the influence of the dutchess. Either the present viscount Chetwind, or his brother William, conveyed eleven thousand pounds from St. John's lady to lady Walsingham, the dutchess's niece.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

[Hardwicke Papers.]

Deems it imprudent to force the Irish to take the coin—Thinks it necessary to remove the lords justices in due time—Proposes that the lord licutenant should immediately proceed to Ireland.

(Copy.)

MY LORD; Houghton, Sept. 1, 1724.

I HAD late last night the honour of your grace's dispatch, with the several letters and papers from Ireland inclosed, and confess I was not a little surprized

at the contents of them. It is not new to see small matters aggravated and carried to a very great height, but these things seldom happen by chance, and when there is in reality little or no reason to complain, nothing but secret management and industry can kindle a general flame in a kingdom. That this is the case in Ireland, I have never doubted from the first beginning of the clamour about the copper coinage, and I hope I shall be excused in saying, that I verily believe nothing but the king's authority being underhand employed against him, could have brought matters to this extremity. But I presume it is not at present so much our business to consider from what secret springs and causes the mischief has arisen, as to endeavour to apply a proper remedy. The popular frenzy and aversion to the taking this money, I am afraid, is now carried to such a degree, that it will scarce be prudent to attempt the forcing their inclinations, especially where they are supported and countenanced in their obstinacy by their governors, and those that are in authority under his majesty. For how is it possible that the king's pleasure should be known, much less that it should be obeyed by the people, when the lords justices refuse to signify his majesty's pleasure to the people, and the council breaks up without coming to any resolution, when the king's orders are under their consideration. This makes it impracticable to hope to change the minds of the people; and to repeat the orders of the king to the lords justices, when they have already told you in effect, that they will not obey them, is but a second time to expose the king's honour, without any hopes of success.

At the same time, I cannot but be of opinion, to suffer the lords justices to continue in authority under such a behaviour, is at once to give up all the power and authority of the crown of England from this time for ever. And as I am not able to say immediately what other persons may be thought proper to supply

their places, to remove them avowedly and expresly for this behaviour, would possibly make them so popular all over the kingdom, that with the interest and influence they have already, they might be able to render the king's government absolutely impracticable, and I think therefore the only expedient is, to send over immediately the lord lieutenant, whose presence has formerly been generally thought necessary, but in times of difficulty or disorder, ought never to be dispensed with; and this particular case seems more than ordinarily to require the presence of the lord lieutenant. For as it is plain no Irish man will venture to stem this torrent, nor even go so far as to endeavour to bring the people to a little temper and moderation, that they might hear reason, the chief governor of Ireland, who must be supposed to have the honour and interest of his majesty, and this kingdom, first and most at heart, and not being a native of Ireland, will be free from that prejudice and partiality which has been the only cause of all this disorder, will properly exert his authority, bring the people to a temper and a sense of their duty, and convince them of the great error and infatuation that they at present labour under. These considerations, make me humbly of opinion, that the only expedient at present is, to send over immediately the lord lieutenant, and if his majesty should be of that opinion, I hope the common pretences for delay of equipage, &c. would not be admitted. How far this measure will answer expectation, I dare not take upon me to answer, for it depends entirely upon the conduct and disposition of the lord lieutenant; but I think it is all that can be done at present.

I shall have been a week here to-morrow, and have been very much taken up in looking into my son's affairs, which a five years minority has left in better order than was to be expected from such a circumstance; and I hope in this week, I shall be able to go through the greatest part of it, and leave this place at

the beginning of next week, and I hope his majesty will have the goodness to excuse this necessary absence from my duty.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE TO LORD TOWNSHEND.

[Hardwicke Papers.]

Suppression of the combination in Scotland, owing to the good conduct of lord Ilay.

(Copy.)

MY LORD; London, September 3, 1725.

IT is with the greatest satisfaction that I give your lordship the following account of the present state of affairs in Scotland, and as this great happy turn is intirely owing to the industry, ability, and resolution of lord Ilay, I can never say enough in his commendation, or do him justice in relating his great dexterity in the conduct and management of this nice and difficult point. And that his majesty may be more fully apprised of the particular transactions in getting through this whole affair, I beg your lordship's patience, if I take it a little further backward, in order to explain it the better.

Your lordship has been already acquainted that the resolution concerted was to begin with prosecuting the brewers before the justices of the peace, for non-payment of the duties charged upon the stock in hand, which was accordingly done, and the brewers thereupon, pursuant to their combination, leaving off brewing immediately, lord Ilay ordered, that four of the chief and principal offenders should be immediately committed upon the warrants of the lords of session, left in the hands of the president, for contempt and

disobedience to their orders, and the authority of the court; and as soon as they were committed, directed inditements and informations to be exhibited against them for their criminal combination, which now they had full evidence of, by having actually left off their brewing. And the town of Edinburgh was actually for about a week under all the distress that they could possibly put them, eight brewers only, by the management of lord Ilay, out of 65, continuing to brew, and the consumption of ale in Edinburg is computed at least at 2,500 barrels per week. But for their further relief, lord Ilay prevailed with one Peter Campbel, an eminent and rich old merchant, to hire two very large brewhouses, and brew all that he possibly could, and compelled the magistrates of Edinburgh not to hinder the country brewers from bringing drink into the town, of which they had not benefit till the 27th of August, when ale was publickly retailed in the streets by country brewers, without any disturbance, and all that was brought immediately sold, and this was the condition of Edinburgh from about the 20th of last month, to the 28th.

On the 21st, his majesty's orders for dismissing the Scotch secretary arrived here, of which I sent an immediate account to lord Ilay that day, that he might have the benefit of that resolution as soon as possible, which I was very sensible he wanted, and persuaded he would find a very good account from. The express arrived at Edinburgh the 26th; on the 25th the brewers petitioned the justices of the peace before whom they were summoned, and in a strong manner insisted, that all further proceedings should be superseded till the meeting of the parliament, when they hoped and questioned not to obtain redress. That application being rejected on the 26th, they applied in a body to the magistrates of Edinburgh to intercede with lord Ilay for the liberty of their brethren that were committed. Lord Ilay took that opportunity of being attended on

the 27th by the magistrates and town council of Edinburgh, and did then publickly, in a full assembly, speak to them with a very becoming spirit, and seasonable resolution, and rejected their application for the liberty of their bretheren with scorn and indignation, which had that effect, that three brewers more, immediately after, lighted their fires and fell to brewing.

On the 27th, late at night, upon the report of lord Ilay's rejecting this application in such a manner, the brewers sent a messenger to desire the quarter session of the justices, where the penalties for non-payment are to be levied by distress, might be adjourned to October next, to which an immediate answer was returned, that nothing would be accepted or heard, but an entire submission and an immediate return to their duty; upon which, in their assembly, they fell into debates, and various opinions began to arise among themselves, and at last unanimously agreed to be determined by a question, *Brew or not.* Which being put by the chairman, he began to take their votes *seriatim* at the right hand; but his right hand man thought it an hardship upon him to be obliged to speak first, the left hand man thought so too, and they could get nobody to give his vote first. At last one Gray declared he thought they had nothing now left to do, but to return to their trades; that he would not be bound by the majority, but began the vote, and voted *brew.* He was immediately followed by another, upon which two warm ones hoped they would hold out, till their bretheren were set at liberty, but these not being supported, the assembly broke up, and such of them as had their things in readiness, fell to brewing that night; and on the 28th at noon, above 40 brewhouses were hard at work in Edinburgh, and ten more at Leith. Lord Ilay has since sent a peremptory order to the brewers, not to hold any more assemblies at their peril. The brewers under confinement have taken till the 31st, to consider what methods they shall take. It is ex-

pected, they will then comply with the order of session, and give security for carrying on their business, upon which they must be set at liberty, but the prosecutions for the criminal combination will still remain good, and I am at present of opinion, should be carried on, to make some examples, if lord Ilay is of opinion that can be done without raising new mutinies and disorders; or at least, that after conviction, they should be obliged to the king for their pardon, if that is thought adviseable.

The trials of the rioters at Glascow, and the conspirators at Edinburgh, will be put off for a fortnight, from the date of the last letters, upon some necessary precautions. But I think I may now congratulate your lordship upon seeing an end to a very troublesome and hazardous affair: the success is intirely owing to the last wise resolution his majesty was pleased to take, and it is plain to a demonstration, that without that alteration, all the art of man could not put an end to these disorders, which had their rise and support from the countenance and protection which they expected and received from hence. I forgot to acquaint your lordship, that I sent down 1,500*l.* to lord Ilay, to answer any expence that should be necessary to carry on his majesty's service. I am confident he will manage to the best advantage. By all letters from Scotland, the affair of the highlands is like to succeed to his majestie's wishes. Urquhart sends me word from thence, that there will be a total submission and surrender of their arms. I am, my lord, with great truth and affection.

HORACE WALPOLE TO STEPHEN POYNTZ.

[Poyntz Papers.]

Lord Townshend testifies his resolution to resign—Is violent against the emperor, and inclined to support the king's electoral views.

DEAR SIR; London, January 21, 1729—30.

I HAD the honour by the post to acknowledge your excellency's letters of the 1st, 20, and 21 inst. N. S. and to send you inclosed a letter from the cardinall, much to the same effect as that which you returned; because count Broglio writes in so false and infamous a manner with respect to my brother Walpole and me, almost every post, that it is thought absolutely necessary to prevent his eminence against such scandalous insinuations, for fear of their making in time some impression; and I don't doubt but that your excellency will take all occasions, without affectation, to make the cardinal sensible of my brother's as well as my sincere attachment to the union between the two crowns. For the French ambassadour represents us both as of another disposition, and attributes all his disappointments to us personally; and I could heartily wish lord Townshend did not show him so much confidence and countenance as he does. For I am apprehensive of a design on the part of Mr. Chauvelin, to change the channell of negotiation between England and France, and instead of making it pass thro' his majesty's ministers at Paris, to have it goe directly from him to count Broglio, and so to the king; which would deprive his majesty of the advantage he has always had of the reasonable and moderate temper of the cardinal, who will become entirely useless to the king's service, in case Mr. Chauvelin is to have the

whole conduct of the affairs, by his writing directly to the French ambassadour passing by, or conferring but slightly with the English embassadour in France; and therefore I hope you will keep up your spirits against him, and not take it always for granted, that all he says in the name of the cardinall, comes from his eminence himselfe.

Lord Townshend, since his last short journey to Norfolk, has not only declared to most of his confidential friends, but even in a calm and serious manner to me, that he is resolved to resign as soon as the session is over; and that in the mean time he will barely give his opinion, but not press it in business, acquiescing with the sentiments of others. I told him nobody would insist upon their opinion, so as to make it prevayl in foreign affairs in opposition to his, who was certainly the best judge. He has since been as active and eager in business as ever I knew him; and his violence against keeping any measures at all with the emperour, and his endeavours to make all measures electorall, preferrable to all other considerations, which is entirely agreeable to the king's sentiments, make some think that his lordship has no thoughts of resigning. But I am of opinion, that when the parliament is up, if any thing should happen contrary to his desire, he may offer to quitt, as he has already done to the king, and will be taken at his word; and will some way or other jozle himself out of place.

I am in such haste, and in such concern, on account of this unsettled and embroyled state of affairs at home, that I scarce know what I write. Things, however, in parliament, will goe on as well as they have begun, but not without strong opposition. The great debate will be about the Hessian troops, but we shall carry it with much the same majority, I believe, as we did the first day's division, which was two to one.

I forgott to tell you, that at the same time, Mr. Chauvelin refused to come into a plan of measures

*

with you, he wrote to count Broglio, to learn the ideas of lord Townshend upon it; but as the French have now consented to consider of a plan of measures to be immediately settled among the allys, I suppose Mr. Chauvelin will have been no longer averse to confer with you on that subject. I was yesterday honoured with your's of the 26th N. S. inclosing a letter to me from the cardinal of the 24th; but have not yett had time to receive his maiestv's commands upon it.

Pray burn this.

HORACE WALPOLE TO THE EARL OF WALDEGRAVE.

[Waldegrave Papers.]

Efforts of opposition, wholly defeated in parliament—Lord Townshend determined to resign—Arrangements to be taken by Sir Robert Walpole, in consequence of that event.

My LORD; April 21—May 2, 1730.

UPON my return out of the country, where I had been for a few days, I mett with the melancholy news of lady Waldegrave's death, at which, I heartily condole with your lordship.

This session of parliament is in a manner come to a conclusion, and I think I may say to a glorious conclusion, for the interest of his majesty, and the honour of his ministers, for the boldness and violence of the opposition, where all the forces of the ennemy, from all quarters, were united and collected; and all the artillery of falsehood and scandal was flung in to make the ennemys army appear more formidable, made the victory more compleat and decisive, as is usual after great battles. Skirmishes, that have happened since the day of Dunkirk, have served only to expose the weakness of the

opponents, tho' certainly intended to give the ennemys abroad, courage and countenance, and to make Richenbach, the Prussian minister, and other foreign, not to say domestick scriblers, write false and wonderfull accounts of the speeches made against the court. Though I cannot but think but your's will by this time become sensible, how vain their expectations must have been, and how fruitless any measures must be, that are grounded upon the hopes of a party here, strong enough to support the imperiall court in their opposition to the engagements of the treaty of Seville. For the allys begin know to feel, that their moderation is no otherwise received by the imperiall ministers, than to gain time, and to amuse them, without any intention of an accommodation, as if the allys were not strong enough, nor united well enough to concert and execute a vigorous plan for fulfilling the engagements with Spain. But they will certainly be disappointed at Vienna in this empty notion, as much as they were in that of the ministers being distressed in England. I shall not pretend to tell your lordship what plan has been concerted at Paris, you will hear that from better hands; but certain it is, that orders are given for severall battallions both here and in Ireland, to gett ready for an embarkation on the first notice, which together with what we have already in Gibraltar and Port Mahon, will make a considerable quota on our part.

I hinted to you before the resolution of a great man to retire: that is fixed and unalterable, as soon as the parliament is up, and as severall places are vacant, sir Robert Walpole has been employed in several conferences with his majesty to fill them up, and upon his advice, the king has resolved, as I am told, to make lord Wilmington privy-seall, with a salary of 3000*l.* per ann. and lord Trevor president of the council, with 4000*l.* per ann. The duke of Dorsett will goe lord lieutenant to Ireland, Mr. Horace Walpole is to be made cofferer, and

'tis thought that lord Harrington will be secretary of state, as soon as lord Townshend has resigned. And it is believed, and not without reason, that your lordship will be named for ambassadour at Paris, as what will be agreeable to you. Nobody is yett mentioned to succeed you at Vienna; but it is not at all unlikely, but that Mr. Robinson may be sent thither minister plenipotentiary, as being perfectly acquainted with the state of affairs in Europe, untill some other shall be thought of to reside there, or untill the success of the events of this year, with regard to peace and war be seen. If your lordship has any objection to going to Paris, you will let me know by the first opportunity, and I will mention it where it is proper; but I am told that marshall Berwick wished to have you in France, as what might be agreeable to you.

I had like to forgett to tell you, that in the last debate upon the state of the nation, in the house of lords, lord Strafford moved that the Hessian troops were burthensome and useless; and it was carried in the negative eighty against twenty.

This day the opponents moved in the house of commons (upon the rumour of troops being ordered to hold themselves in readyness) an address to his majesty to lay the secret article of the treaty of Seville before the parliament, and after a debate of about an hour and half, it was carried in the negative, no's 277, aye's 75, and it plainly appeared by this debate, and by the complexion of the house that they will support his majesty in fulfilling his engagements, for the execution of the treaty of Seville. Your's most affectionately, &c.

HORACE WALPOLE TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Influence of Chauvelin over the cardinal—His own decreases in the same proportion—Speaks well of lord Waldegrave—Desires to return home.

(Private.)

Rivecouni near Compeigne, July 12—23, 1730.

DEAR BROTHER;

OUR joynt dispatch will give you so particular an account of the situation of this court, that I have little to add to it. The generall ideas for a plan of operations is, I think, in the main agreeable to the manner and places in which we should on all accounts desire the war to be pushed, if it becomes necessary; though this project is at present calculated with a design, on the part of France, to appear more forward than the world will believe them to be for acting; and to endeavour to fling the fault, if possible, upon the other allys, should they appear backward in settling it; and they will certainly make use of it for that purpose with Spain: but as both the Spanish ministers here are fully convinced of his majesty's readyness to have executed his engagements, even by force, this year, and have wrote to that effect in their last letters, and, consequently, if nothing be done, must lay it at the door of France; we must take care to avoyd giving them any handle to believe otherwise, and appear as forward in settling the plan as the French can be.

In the mean time I am persuaded of the cardinall's firm resolution not to doe any thing this year; which will soon be known to the Imperialists by the nature of the facts, and the passing away of the season without any other intelligence; and, therefore, although it is very likely that they have something more to offer than what

they have hitherto produced, I do not think it likely that they will be forward or explicit in speaking again; nor indeed will they ever be so untill they find the allys in earnest for acting: and although the situation of affairs in generall, and of this court in particular, makes an accommodation very desirable on all accounts, yett you will never have it from the Imperiall court, by appearing, either joyntly with our allys, or even separately, over desirous of it. The allys together will have no influence upon the emperour but as they shall appear formidable to him; and neither England nor Holland can, by any private insinuations, dispose him to be reasonable, without their coming to an entire separation with France, which will make the emperor so much master of the negociation, and will disoblige France to such a degree, as may be attended with the worst consequences.

This being the present state of affairs, and there being no manner of appearance of any reall action, or negociation to purpose for this year, Mr. Poyntz and I have wrote this day for leave to come home immediately, where I think I can be of more service than I can possibly be here. For, as I hinted to you formerly, monsieur Chauvelin is absolute master of the cardinall, and consequently of all affairs, and without his eminence himselfe perhaps being sensible of it. The Garde des Sceaux, by great assiduity and pains in easing the other of the business, and by great address in humouring him, two points of great moment to gain a man of his age and weakness, turns his eminence as he pleases. I should be glad to establish a confidence with monsieur Chauvelin; but as he is a person without plan or principle, and as all his politicks are governed by the little chicanes of a lawyer, so that in negociating even with his friends, he always appears to be in a state of contest and controversy; it is impossible to make a friendship with him. He makes use of the most servile complaisance towards them only as a

means for trick and amusement, and therefore I cannot possibly gett any farther in his intimacy than the having an extream civill and decent carriage towards him; and I must own I think lord Waldegrave as proper a minister as could possibly be sent hither; for, besides his having a very good understanding, his supple and inoffensive disposition is the best talent against the artifices of monsieur Chauvelin. For as his lordship will have caution and prudence enough as to take nothing upon himselfe without orders, he has at the same time patience and phlegm enough to parry the dangerous attempts and insinuations of the other without disobliging him.

From this account of the Garde des Sceaux's character, and his power over the cardinall, you will easily imagine that my situation here is by no means agreeable. And although I am as yett personally well with the cardinall, and have in all appearance all the marks of his friendship, yett since I cannot make that use of him, as I formerly did, for his majesty's service, my continuance here will rather be more a prejudice to his majesty's affairs: for it will not be long before that want of credit which I formerly had, or the effect of it, will be perceived by other ministers. I hope therefore you will forward as much as possible my returning immediately home; and if, upon my taking my leave of the cardinall, I think it will be of any use to fix a private correspondence with him, and it can be safely done without disobliging monsieur Chauvelin, which I much doubt, I will take care of it.

II.

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Enforces the necessity of compulsory methods with the emperor—Proposes to summon the parliament in October—Desires to return.

(More private.)

August 5—16, 1730.

BESIDES what I have wrote in my other letter, I must add, that I doe not see any possibility of finishing with the emperor by a separate negociation, without being in a condition to make him apprehend the consequences of a dangerous war. Because the strongest assurances are lyable to such delays, evasions, and chicans, before they are brought to an execution, that his Imperiall majesty, lett his professions be never so great, can allways defer the performance so long, that you will not be able to satisfye Spain; and as a coldness must take place between England and France, whenever we and the Dutch aim at a particular conciliation with the emperour, before he has executed what he promises, the naturall and politicall slowness of the Imperiall court will enable this to sett even Spain against us.

Another consideration occurs peculiar to yourself and me, which is, that the Imperiall ministers have, I am afraid, conceived such a distrust against us, and may have contracted such an intimacy with Pulteney and our ennemys, that, whenever they have it in their power, they will artfully manage and delay things in such a manner as may be the most prejudiciall to the present ministry in England; and, therefore, fear only will work upon the emperour to doe right, after having rejected the offers already made. I must therefore own, that if the plan of operations can be finished, or agreed

upon in the main, soon, and a proper paper can be prepared ready for the press, to show the unreasonableness of the Imperiall conduct, after all that has passed, I should be glad if the parliament could be called to meet at the latter end of October, or the beginning of November, and that his majesty, by opening it, may acquaint them with the reason, as being desirous to have the concurrence of the parliament for enabling him to fulfill his engagements, since all the means of an accommodation have been tryed in vain, &c.; and to ask for ten thousand more English to be raised. If this could be practicable, I am persuaded that the emperour will consent to Spanish garrisons by Christmas; but if the parliament does not meet till January, I am apprehensive that till that time, things with regard to acting or accommodation, will goe on but lamely. This thought of the parliament meeting sooner, has just now occurred to me, and the more I reflect upon it the more I like it.

I can't conclude without desiring you to lett Mr. Poyntz and me come away as soon as we have obtained the sentiments of this court about the plan of operations; for as it is fitt that nothing should be finally concluded here without taking his majesty's sentiments upon what shall be prepared, I think lord Waldegrave will be able to doe that very well. But as long as I am here, the credit I have constantly had, and my near relation to you, will make this court imagine, that whatever is concerted in my presence is agreeable to his majesty's sentiments, or at least that I am able to lett them know what they are; which will not be altogether the case of lord Waldegrave, who may much easyer take any thing *ad referendum*, without any surmises or reflections by this court upon it, than I can; and as to any papers to be prepared for setting things in a right light to the nation, I believe you will think that both Mr. Poyntz and I may be of service in England.

[Orford Papers.]

[This paper, which is written in the hand-writing of sir Robert Walpole, is without date or signature; but was inclosed in a letter to Horace Walpole during the course of their correspondence in 1730.]

Queries in regard to the insincerity of France—States the necessity of insisting on the demolition of Dunkirk—And recommends the renewing of the alliance with the house of Austria.

FRANCE will certainly do nothing this year. Did their delay of the expedition to Sicily proceed from the hopes of a favourable answer from Vienna?—That expectation is now over. What measures will they now take?—Is their first principle to avoid a war at all events?—And do they hope for this without obliging either the emperor or Spain?—If they will not attempt the securing to don Carlos the places in Italy, the queen of Spain is at present totally disobliged.—If they will not attempt it by force, have they any other method that Spain will accept, and the emperor consent to?—If no satisfaction is to be given to Spain, will the emperor be obliged by France's barely declining to introduce the Spanish garrisons?—Or will the emperor still remain uneasy till his own views and expectations are answered?—And will France consent to the guaranty of the emperour's succession?

If, then, the foundation of the treaty of Vienna was the desire of the queen of Spain, on one hand, to aggrandize her own family; and the view of the emperor, on the other hand, to secure his guaranty; is the conclusion of the alliance of Hanover to end in giving satisfaction to neither of these parties?—Or does France propose to continue negociating, and keep these two great powers in a continued suspence, and neither break nor make up with either; and at the same

time continue the allies of Hanover under the same incertitude, expences, and hazards they are now exposed to from their union and adherence to France?

What part then must the allies of Hanover take?—The present and immediate obligation upon them is the execution of the treaty of Seville.—Those that are sincere must convince Spain, as far as they are able, of their sincerity.—England has offered to joyn in the enterprise upon Italy; England is ready to act immediately in the expedition upon Sicily; England is farther willing to enter into treaties with the kiag of Sardinia, and to pay such subsidies as are reasonable, towards carrying on the war effectually on the side of Italy.—Of this, Spain should be made as sensible as our intentions are real and sincere: and this seems a proper way of effectuating the introduction of Spanish garrisons into the places of Italy, and securing the succession of don Carlos. For to distresse the emperour, and, by successe in making acquisitions, to make him feel the weight of the allies of Hanover, is the only way of bringing him to reason; which, by the present conquest of Sicily, and a more extensive war in Italy another year, if it should be found necessary, is the only practicable method.

What then retards these operations?—France insists upon a general plan, both for settling the equilibre, and for carrying on a general war, before they begin any enterprise that may, in its consequences, draw on a generall war.—A generall war may be the consequence of the enterprise upon Sicily; but if all the allies show themselves, and in earnest, the successe of this year may probably prevent a generall war.—Or I would submitt it to consideration, in what parts of the world could the emperour be able to act offensively, if he is push'd with as much vigour as the allies of Hanover are able to exert, on the side of Italy.—And I know no necessity for the allies of acting offensively in any other parts, in order to make such conquests, as shall

be retained upon a peace, or become the subject of future partitions or distributions.—If the proper quotas and proportions be held ready by the allies for their mutual security, and such as may at the same time oblige the emperour to keep a sufficient force for his own security in other parts, this will make such a diversion, and find such employment for a great part of the emperour's troops, that he will not be formidable, or able to resist the allies in Italy.

This reasoning is founded upon a presumption that France will not be brought to penetrate into Silesia and Bohemia, or do any thing that shall really distresse the emperour, without England's and Holland's joining in what they can never consent to, and agreeing to such expenses as they are not able to make.—And this, it is to be taken for granted, they do not demand with any hopes or desire of a complyance, but upon a resolution of doing nothing at least this year.—If there was the least prospect of their acting a better part another year, the inconveniencies of this year's delay would be more tolerable.—But I take it for granted, that the same or some other difficulties in another shape will arise another year.

This brings this whole affair to a very great and almost insuperable dilemma.—But at the present, the part that England is to act, is to find the proper means of convincing Spain of the truth and reality of their present circumstances, and scituation of their affairs.—If England would join with Spain in the enterprise upon Sicily without France, I suppose it is most certain that Holland would not.—England then and Spain alone are certainly unequal to the carrying on a war against the emperour; the consequences and dangers that would arise on all parts of the world are too obvious to want mentioning, and Spain would be disappointed.—But as the difficulties are in no manner to be imputed to England, it would be most unjust for Spain to turn their resentment towards England, who alone stand by them,

and are ready to fulfill their engagements.—But a full explanation of this matter, and a good understanding settled between the crowns of England and Spain, would secure to the two nations the mutual advantage of trade and commerce; and the queen of Spain must be sensible that it is her interest to preserve the friendship and support of England, who will be allways ready, upon any more favourable opportunity, and assist and support her in the pretensions of her family.—What turn the queen of Spain will take when she truly sees her present situation, or whether she will be brought to any temperament, is worth considering; but offers of that kind should arise, I think, from those who will do no more, rather than from us, who are ready to do all that is incumbent upon us; we should not disoblige by new proposalls.

The procuring a good understanding with Spain being settled as a certain point, it is now to be considered, what part we are to act with France.—Although we are not to consent to left them lay the blame of their measures and proceedings upon us, we are not, I think, at present to bring their friendship with England to the test, upon the point of the treaty of Seville.—There is something that concerns us more nearly, wherein their conduct is so strong a symptom and indication of their disposition towards us, that it must be fully explained; i mean the affair of Dunkirk: if the Garde des Sceaux grows jealous of the friendship of England, from the insinuations and representations from hence with regard to France, he should take care not to give such just cause of complaint.—In what a light will the friendship of France stand in our parliament, if they do not only fail in the execution of the treaty of Seville, and appear at last to desert us there, but at the same time violate their own treaties, and act so infamously in regard to the demolition of Dunkirk?—That must be done, or new measures must be entered into; France must give England satisfaction, ample satisfac-

tion, in the affair of Dunkirk, if they hope to continue the union betwixt the two crowns.—If they will not, we must consent to the demands of the emperour; if France desires we should joyn with them in preserving the ballance of power in Europe against the emperour, they must do us justice in the affair of Dunkirk.—It is not reasonable that we should stand all the hazards of disobliging the emperour for the sake of their friendship, and be ill-treated by France in a matter of undoubted right.

If therefore this summer is to be spent in negociations and inactions, and we must purchase the demolition of Dunkirk at that price, one may attone for the other; and, after the clamour and expectation that is raised upon that subject, the effectual demolition of Dunkirk may contribute as much to the making things easy, as the contrary will certainly make them impracticable.—I mean it is impossible to stand both; but one may make the other go down.—And if France will do what is right upon that point, other matters, though troublesome and disagreeable, may be got through.—But our embassadours must loose no time in knowing what they may depend upon about Dunkirk; for by that, I think, our future conduct must from this time be regulated: for it will be a demonstration of their regard or no regard for England.

THE END OF VOL. II.

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